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Jerusalem 6-17
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By Eyal Naveh

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Unemployment hits two-year high

Page 8

Knicks win in double overtime

World of Sport

Dee Dee Bridgewater struts her stuff

Arts & Entertainment, Page 7

Index

Arts & Entertainment7
Business8
Crossword11
Movies/TV11
Opinion6
Sports10

Soviet Jew spied on Israel for Kremlin

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

A spy who sent Israel's secrets by Morse code to the KGB, and is serving a 15-year sentence, was yesterday exposed to the public after the Supreme Court lifted a ban on publication of the affair.

The ban was lifted at the state's request so the case could serve as a precedent in determining heavy sentences for espionage. There have been unconfirmed reports of the arrest of other new immigrants on suspicion of spying.

Spy Roman Weisfeld, today 55, was recruited by the KGB in the Soviet Union in 1976 with the express purpose of making aliya in order to collect military and political information about Israel. He underwent a period of training in various espionage techniques and in 1980 was sent on his mission.

Weisfeld was instructed to collect information about Israel's relations with Arab countries, the US, and Third World countries. This he relayed to the former Soviet Union with equipment he brought from his homeland. The information was believed to have been passed on to Arab countries as well.

In return, he received large sums of money and a small apartment in the USSR. Weisfeld, an electrical engineer, found himself a job with the Elco company in Haifa - a job which eventually gained him access to one of Israel's main air bases. He succeeded in maintaining contact with his operators in the KGB for five years with the use of Morse code.

In November 1985, Weisfeld went to Vienna, where he met one of his operators. He received \$3,000 as well as more sophisticated equipment. It was after this visit that Weisfeld began his work on the air base as a company representative. There he was able to collect data on the types and movements of aircraft, the organization of the squadrons, and the storage of weaponry.

This continued for more than two years. In April 1988, Weisfeld



Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein (right) and police investigations division head Cmdr. Sando Mazor leave the Justice Ministry in Jerusalem yesterday after holding consultations on the Bar-On affair.

Hanegbi: I'm clean

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

Supreme Court Chief Justice Aharon Barak testified yesterday before the police team probing the Bar-On affair, as the focus of the investigation moved to Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi.

Hanegbi turned down a suggestion that he take a lawyer, saying that he was "clean... strong and optimistic."

At the request of State Attorney Edas Arbel, the police team arrived yesterday afternoon at Barak's office on the second floor of the Supreme Court building in Jerusalem. For 45 minutes, Barak gave them information about what he had heard regarding the appointment of Bar-On as attorney-general from Hanegbi. It was Hanegbi who had told the cabinet, in ambiguous fashion, that he had consulted Barak about the

appointment, intimating that Barak had not opposed the candidacy.

In keeping with the instructions not to discuss the case, the court spokesman remained tightlipped last night, refusing to reveal further details other than that the testimony had taken place.

Reacting to a suggestion made

national elements to decide on the appointment, "such a person could no longer go on serving in his position."

Sarah Hanig adds: Netanyahu is not blaming Hanegbi for the Bar-On appointment, and their relations are unaffected, according to Weinroth.

Talk about a rift was sparked by Weinroth's comments intimating that the appointment was pushed by Hanegbi, and that Hanegbi let Netanyahu believe his candidacy passed Barak's scrutiny.

"Netanyahu does not feel that he was misled by Hanegbi in any way," Weinroth said, "this despite the fact that the prime minister did not initiate the Bar-On appointment himself."

Hanegbi told Netanyahu an hour before Bar-On's nomination was presented that Barak knows about the appointment. This left Netanyahu with the impression that Barak voiced no opposition, but no one is claiming that Hanegbi sought to mislead here. Perhaps he himself did not understand things fully," Weinroth said.

Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh reportedly backs Netanyahu's version of events.

When an Israel Radio interviewer asked Weinroth whether he recommends that Hanegbi hire himself a lawyer, he replied: "I suggest everybody get a lawyer. Lawyers are not monsters, and getting a lawyer is not an incriminating act. Any citizen who buys and sells a flat ought to have a lawyer, because we are professionals who perform a given service in their chosen field of expertise."

Suspect scoop may bring down gov't, Page 2

In an Israel Radio interview by the prime minister's attorney Ya'acov Weinroth that he hire a lawyer, Hanegbi said: "I don't need one. The best lawyer for me is the truth... I am clean. I feel strong and optimistic [that the investigation will clear me]."

Hanegbi, who cannot release statements through his spokeswoman Etti Eshed, since both of them were interrogated and are therefore obliged not to speak about the topic, let it be known through "circles close to him" that he had not been the one to propose the appointment of Bar-On.

Hanegbi's "circles" pointed to the prime minister, and were quoted by Channel 1 as saying Netanyahu himself had met with Bar-On even before former attorney-general Michael Ben-Yair resigned on December 1.

MK Shaul Yahalom (NRP) said yesterday that, if it is proven that either Netanyahu or Hanegbi had knowingly cooperated with crim-

PM finalizes Har Homa

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will announce at tomorrow's ministerial meeting on Jerusalem that he intends to permit the building of 3,500 homes in Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem, alongside the 2,600 for Jews in the first phase of Har Homa.

The figure was agreed upon in a meeting between Netanyahu and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert yesterday, and was subsequently confirmed by the Prime Minister's Office.

"Our plan is to agree to 3,500 units for Palestinians spread out in Arab neighborhoods in the city," one official said. "Our plan includes building in neighborhoods such as Silwan, Ras el-Amud, Issawiya and A-Tur."

He said all the Arab building would be permitted "inside the municipal boundaries."

Officials hope that the announcement will mute Palestinian objections to the construction of Har Homa, to which Netanyahu has committed himself amid very heavy coalition pressure.

Officials said they have quietly passed on these intentions to the

Palestinian Authority leadership, despite statements that Israel feels it does not need to consult with the PA on Jerusalem.

As originally envisioned by planners, Har Homa will contain about 6,500 homes. If 2,600 are to be constructed now, it remains unclear when the remaining 3,900 will be built.

Earlier yesterday, Israel-based ambassadors representing the rotating leadership of the European Union gave the Foreign Ministry a demarche on Har Homa. The group includes the ambassadors of the Netherlands, which holds the rotating chairmanship, Ireland, Britain, and the European Commission.

According to a statement issued after the meeting, the envoys said Europeans believe the Netanyahu government is committed to the peace process, but "they are very worried" about plans for Har Homa.

Foreign Ministry deputy director-general Yoav Biran, who is filling in for Director-General Eltan Bentsur, who is abroad, noted that most of the land expropriated for the project came from Jews. He added that there is nothing in the Oslo Accords which restricts Israeli construction in

Jerusalem, but complained about Palestinian institutions in the city. Har Homa figured prominently in Netanyahu's meeting with Jordan's King Hussein earlier this week.

When publicly asked about the project, Hussein sought to play down the differences, but did say that Jordan did not want any action taken that could undermine the peace process.

Meanwhile, there are indications that as a result of the Netanyahu-Hussein meeting, Crown Prince Hassan may visit soon. Officials say that Hassan may come for the Saturday night opening of the Yitzhak Rabin study center in Tel Aviv.

Hassan was due to visit last October, but the trip was cancelled as a result of the opening of the Western Wall Tunnel exit.

Jordanian Information Minister Marwan Muasher said yesterday that the Jordanian and Israeli transport ministers would meet shortly to discuss Jordan's request to ease the movement of goods into the parts of the West Bank controlled by the PA. Muasher said Israel has also agreed to broaden the list of items that Jordan can export to the West Bank.

Drink l'haim - salt water being turned into wine

By JUDY SEGEL

People will soon be able to toast each other with cabernet sauvignon from grapes grown with salty groundwater in the Negev.

Researchers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Hebrew University and a Turkish researcher from Izmir have succeeded in producing a successful first crop of seedless, purple-red grapes whose wine, to the layman at least, tastes just like cabernet sauvignon.

The success was reported at the international conference on "Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Development of Desert Agriculture," now being held at Ben-Gurion University's Sede Boker campus, organized by BGU and the Science Ministry.

The four-day event is also being attended by experts from Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, and the Palestinian Authority.

Prof. Yiftah Ben-Asher, of BGU's Desert Research Institute, said yesterday that his two dunams of vines recently produced their first harvest.

A year after he planted his, Sede Boker researchers planted 30

dunams, which are due to be expanded to 80 dunams for commercial uses. The Rishon LeZion wineries produced and bottled wines from the grapes. He can't say exactly when the wine will be marketed, as no deal has yet been signed.

"It has the same color, aroma and taste as cabernet sauvignon grown in sweet water," said Ben-Asher, "at least to the layman."

Le wine experts agree, vines could cover barren land from Ramat Hanegbi to Mitzpe Ramon and serve as a new Negev industry, he added.

"We are now working to improve the flavor even more," said Ben-Asher of his team, which includes Yoel de Malach, Yizhak David and Moshe Sagi of Ramat Hanegbi's experimental farm (which proposed the experiment), Prof. Ben-Ami Bravdo of the HU Agriculture Faculty, and Serra Hepaksoy of Turkey.

The Turks, said Ben-Asher, have plenty of fresh water, but they're interested in planting vines on a sea coast, and thus are very interested in the project.

Underground water in the Negev has about one-tenth the salt concentration of the sea, but even that is fatal to vegetables, fruits and a variety of other crops. The root stock of the vines have been found to work like a filter and keep the salt out of the grapes, explains Ben-Asher.

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Coalition rallies behind Netanyahu

By LIAT COLLINS

The coalition expressed its support yesterday for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in the wake of leaks about his questioning under caution in the Bar-On affair.

"We should all stand behind the prime minister. From the initial reports it seems all the charges involving criminal aspects have been ruled out and the rest have still not been proven," MK Michael Kleiner (Geshet-Likud), who heads the Land of Israel Front, said.

Kleiner said that despite his group's opposition to the prime minister's delays in construction of Jewish housing in Har Homa, Netanyahu should be given full support in the Bar-On affair. "One should not link the Hebron-Bar-On affair with building Har Homa."

The Likud faction executive accused the opposition of being bad losers.

In a statement issued after a meeting yesterday morning, the party said: "Those who failed in the elections are trying to go against the voters' will."

The executive unanimously voted to offer its full support of Netanyahu "in his struggle against the opposition which is demanding his suspension while relying on rumors, leaks, and slurs."

It accused the opposition of trying to go against the voters' will and to prevent the prime minister from carrying out his work.

In the coalition executive meeting, coalition chairman MK Michael Eitan said all attempts by the opposition to suspend or topple the prime minister should be rejected.

Yuri Stern (Yisrael Ba'Aliya) said the media "is carrying out a

lynch of the prime minister." MK Yitzhak Cohen (Shas) told the coalition meeting: "For seven years [Shas leader Aryeh] Deri has been persecuted in the same manner, the same leaks. You're only feeling what we have felt for seven years."

Third Way faction chairman Yehuda Harel said no steps should be taken until the investigation ends. However, should the charges prove true, the government would have no right to exist, he said.

The National Religious Party, in its weekly faction meeting, also announced full support of the prime minister. It also expressed confidence in the manner in which the police and State Attorney's Office are carrying out the investigation.

The NRP MKs were not unanimous in their backing of the prime minister, however. Knesset Law Committee Chairman Shaul Yahalom said: "There is no doubt that Netanyahu and [Justice Minister] Tzahi Hanegbi coordinated the appointment of the attorney-general with Shas. Even if it isn't criminal, that's no way to behave and therefore I won't strengthen or weaken the premier but wait for the results of the investigation."

At the Labor faction meeting, party leader Shimon Peres called on his MKs to refrain from reaching conclusions before the end of the investigation and also warned against putting pressure on the premier.

He did, however, read out a statement saying the party is "very worried about the public norms of the government. To act responsibly, the party will wait until the end of the investigation to sound its opinion."

Hebron Jews balk over street

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The Jewish community in Hebron has protested the decision to open part of King David (Shuhada) Street, which runs near the Jewish quarter, to two-way traffic.

In a letter sent yesterday to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Knesset

members, the community leaders demanded a delay in opening the road to two-way traffic, until improvements are made to ensure the safety of the community's residents.

"There are no sidewalks for our children to walk on and no pedestrian crossings are marked," said Hebron spokesman Noam Amon, adding that opening the road also presents a security risk to the settlers.

The section of the road was opened earlier this month to emergency and municipal traffic and taxis on a one-way basis, as the first stage of a four-stage plan to restore the street to normal use. The portion opened consists of a 150-meter section from Gross Square, near the Abraham Avinu Quarter, to the Padesco Gas station and then past Beit Romano toward the market.

The road was closed off at both ends after the Machpela Cave massacre three years ago, in fear of revenge attacks against settlers.

Avi Benayahu, the defense minister's media coordinator, said the matter was being examined, and they would reply to the community when a decision had been reached.



Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Ismail Karadayi (center) pays his respects yesterday at Yad Vashem.

(Brian Headler)

Turkish army chief arrives

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Ismail Karadayi begins his official visit with the IDF and defense establishment today. Both sides hope it will culminate with strengthened military links between the two countries.

An IDF honor guard is to receive Karadayi at Camp Rabin in Tel Aviv, where his host, Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak is to introduce him to Defense Minister Yitzhak

Mordechai. Karadayi's visit comes as the pro-Western Turkish military is openly pushing for maintaining strategic links with Israel, despite opposition from Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan.

Karadayi arrived yesterday and immediately visited Yad Vashem. It is his first visit to Israel and comes a year after a visit by his deputy, Gen. Cevik Bir, who signed an agreement to hold joint maneuvers and training exercises.

Israeli pilots have subsequently used Turkish airspace for training, and Israel Aircraft Industries is to upgrade 54 Turkish F-4s in a deal worth \$640 million.

Karadayi is expected to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later this week.

Israel has never fully disclosed its military agreement with Turkey, which has drawn fire from countries like Egypt, Syria, and Iran. But Turkish officials have said the agreement will allow Israeli warplanes to seek

sanctuary in Turkey, and Turkey will also allow Israel to gather intelligence information on Syria and Iran from inside its borders. In turn, Israel will help Turkey organize its border control along the frontier with Syria and Iran.

Syria's relations with Turkey are often tense because of water-sharing disputes and charges that Syria extends support to Kurdish rebels fighting for a homeland in southeast Turkey. Damascus denies this.

The suspect scoop that may bring down a government

By HERB KEINON

It began as a somewhat suspect scoop in the middle of a Channel 1 newscast last month, when reporter Ayala Hasson alleged that Aryeh Deri had picked Roni Bar-On for attorney-general, in return for a plea bargain in his bribery trial. It has turned into a story that not only hasn't died, as government officials promised it would, but could very well kill Benjamin

Netanyahu's government.

Bar-On, a Jerusalem criminal lawyer, first came to the public's attention on January 10, when Israel Radio reported that, at the weekly cabinet meeting, he was chosen as the successor to Michael Ben-Yair.

The following Sunday, the country's papers on reported a "stormy" cabinet meeting, at which minister after minister opposed the appointment, not only because they were not consulted, but because Bar-On was "not of attorney-general caliber."

But Netanyahu insisted, "How will it look to the public if you will

not approve the appointment," he told the cabinet at one point, according to a *Ma'ariv* report. "It is not possible to push this off until next week, it is impossible. It is within the authority of the prime minister, and the justice minister, to put forth a candidate for attorney-general, and you need to approve the appointment today."

The Hebron agreement came before the cabinet that same week; Shas voted for it.

According to *Ma'ariv*, "Some cabinet members were of the opinion that the Bar-On appointment was made in coordination with the Shas ministers."

"The fact is that the Shas ministers did not not oppose the appointment, did not speak against it, and when [Ariel] Sharon raised the possibility that the appointment was coordinated with them, they chuckled," one senior minister said.

"I know Bar-On, he is a good man, but he can't be a good attorney-general," Ze'ev (Beny) Begin said. "It is inconceivable to appoint people in this manner. He is a political activist, and does not have the needed attributes."

Dan Meridor agreed: "This is not acceptable. It is inconceivable that a political activist be appointed to such an important position." Bar-On's appointment was eventually approved by a vote of 12-1, with five abstentions. Begin

cast the lone no vote, and the abstentions came from Meridor, David Levy, and Limor Livnat from Likud, and Yitzhak Levy and Ze'ulun Hammer of the National Religious Party.

Almost immediately there were reports that Shas was behind the appointment, in exchange for its support for the Hebron deal.

Ma'ariv ran a small story saying that Hammer denied that the NRP abstained because of a "political deal" between Shas and Netanyahu, through which Bar-On would get the attorney-generalship in return for a Shas vote for Hebron redeployment.

Deri was quoted as saying that he knew nothing about the appointment.

After the appointment was made public, a storm raged, but this had more to do with Bar-On's qualifications, rather than news of a deal struck with Shas.

Netanyahu emphatically denied the story. In an interview with Channel 1, he stated that "Deri never proposed or recommended Bar-On in any manner whatsoever. He did not recommend him or press for his appointment. These bizarre reports are out and out lies. There was no conspiracy and this is an attempt at libel. This is entirely baseless, absolute gibberish. I am astounded that the television should publicize such non-

sense. A little more responsibility and professionalism is warranted."

Four days later a police investigation began, with Inspector General Assaf Hefetz saying it would end "within a matter of days." The investigation is still going strong, nearly a month later.

The attorney-general's seat was filled by Elyakim Rubinstein on January 29, an appointment pundits said would have saved Netanyahu, and the country, much heartache had it been made a few weeks earlier.

On February 6, the nation's attention was diverted by the helicopter collision over She'ar Yashuv. But during this period, the investigation prodded along.

Among those questioned were Hasson, Hanegbi, Deri, Prime Minister's Office Director-General Avigdor Lieberman, Likud mover-and-shaker David Appel, who allegedly brought Bar-On to Deri's attention, and Dan Avi-Yitzhak, Deri's lawyer.

Netanyahu himself was questioned last week in a session that was first described as coopera-

tive, but later termed difficult. It is still not clear whether he was questioned under caution, meaning that he is suspected of a crime and that what he said could be used against him. Netanyahu has since hired a lawyer.

And then last Wednesday, Avi-Yitzhak quit as Deri's lawyer. Avi-Yitzhak was originally Netanyahu's choice for attorney-general, and also was rumored to have been the source of Hasson's story.

His resignation was significant because of the letter he sent to Deri, in which he said: "...I dared for totally relevant reasons to oppose your plan to appoint Bar-On as attorney general." This went a long way toward confirming Hasson's original report.

If this is true, if Deri pushed - because of his own legal problems - to have Bar-On as attorney-general, the nagging, Watergate-esque question is how much of this did Lieberman, Hanegbi, or Netanyahu know, and does it constitute a crime.

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MK Hanan Porat explains the NRP position to Yuval Rabin yesterday.

NRP hosts Yuval Rabin

By LIAT COLLINS

The meeting was the message, said Yuval Rabin, head of the An Entire Generation Demands Peace movement, who met yesterday with members of the National Religious Party in the Knesset.

"We have always called for, and continue to call for peace, both at home and with our neighbors," said Rabin, son of the assassinated prime minister.

The meeting was meant to take place before the Hebron redeployment, but was postponed "for technical reasons."

But the message remains relevant, Rabin said. He said it was important to meet with the fourth

largest party in the government, "particularly one which opposes the peace process."

The main outcome of the discussions was the decision to continue to meet in different forums.

Although the meeting was generally quiet, NRP deputy secretary-general Uri Elitzur at one point accused Rabin of "exploiting the call to unity as a trick to promote a controversial issue [the peace process]. And it is only proper for you to express that in public."

Faction chairman Hanan Porat leaped to Rabin's defense telling the room: "We are smart enough to understand what they did and did not say, but we are still con-

vinced that what we have in common is more than what we have not got in common and we can't ignore that."

Shamir snubs parley of Land of Israel Front

Harel: Without building in Jerusalem there is no coalition

By LIAT COLLINS

A meeting of the Land of Israel Front, lobbying for the immediate construction of Har Homa and other projects in Jerusalem, was stood up by its star speaker yesterday: former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir.

No official reason was given for his absence but MKs deduced that he did not want to openly attack Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a meeting in the Knesset following the latest developments in the "Bar-On-for-Hebron" investigation.

Apart from MKs who are members of the front, the meeting was attended by members of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Professors for a Strong Israel and other groups.

Front chairman MK Michael Kleiner (Geshet) announced that the prime minister had informed Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert that the ministerial committee on Jerusalem would decide tomorrow to authorize the Har Homa project.

Kleiner repeated his promise to the prime minister that the coalition MKs and their supporters would serve as a safety net for the government if the Jerusalem construction raises opposition.

He also repeated the warning that should the prime minister not realize his commitment to build in the capital, the front would turn into an opposition.

Kleiner did not retract the decision to lead a visit by the Knesset caucus to Ras el-Amud tomorrow during debates in the plenum and said this would depend on construction work starting in the capital. Last week the opposition won several votes in the plenum thanks to the absence of the Front's MKs, on a similar tour.

Olmert, who was also invited to address the front, decided not to appear in view of Netanyahu's promise.

Ma'aleh Adumim Mayor Benny Kashriel, who did address the meeting, said at the outset: "We will not be satisfied until we see the bulldozers working. We have received many

promises about building in the past and unfortunately so far they have not been realized."

He stressed the importance of building the city's northern access and ring roads and the El project which would link Ma'aleh Adumim to Jerusalem.

Third Way faction chairman Yehuda Harel told his party colleagues "without building in Jerusalem there is no coalition."

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid, however, wrote to Netanyahu warning him against deciding in favor of the Har Homa project. "Har Homa is not Mount Moriah and Jerusalem will remain Jerusalem without a neighborhood on the site," he said. "I view it as a very serious matter that you are giving in to coalition pressure on such a serious subject which is likely to endanger the entire peace process and bring it to a crisis point."

Sarid likened the Har Homa project to the opening of the exit of the Western Wall Tunnel which sparked rioting in September that took 70 lives.

Man found shot in mob-style hit

The body of Ya'acov Kohalon, one of those charged with the attempted murder of underworld figure Ze'ev Rosenstein, was found yesterday morning in the Yad Elihu section of Tel Aviv. According to Magen David Adom paramedic Nadav Castro, he had been shot in the back of the neck.

On Sunday night, police received an anonymous telephone call telling them where the body could be found. But the body was not where the caller said, and it was only after searches lasting until yesterday morning that it was found.

The trial of Kohalon, who was charged along with Rafi Weizman and the missing Ilan Aslan, with shooting and wounding Rosenstein, was to have begun today. Aslan is thought to be behind the shooting, as he suspects Rosenstein of ordering the hit on his brother, gangland kingpin Yehazkel Aslan.

Kohalon was last seen on Friday, and police said he had been killed about two days before his body was found.

Police also said the murder leads them to fear for the life of Ilan Aslan, who disappeared about two months ago. (Itim)

Kalansuwa mops up as Kinneret rises

By DAVID FRIDGE

The forum of Arab Council Heads yesterday called on the public to donate money to help residents of Kalansuwa where 1,500 homes — over a third of the village — were flooded in the recent torrential rains.

Residents of the village, in the Triangle, continued mopping up operations yesterday in the wake of the floods, which resulted when two rivers, Alexander and Tzur, overflowed.

Hussein Suleiman, spokesman for the council, said the damage to property in the village was an estimated NIS 20 million, including damage to homes, roads and sewerage and drainage networks.

"We are calling on members of the public, especially in the Arab sector, to donate whatever they can afford, to help the residents of Kalansuwa who have suffered enormously," said Suleiman, who heads the Mash'had Local Council near Nazareth.

The council said so far it has not received assistance from the government or any other agencies, despite promises of aid.

The rain, accompanied by isolated thunderstorms, continued yesterday, mainly in the central and southern districts, where there were reports of flooding on some roads.

The Ein Gedi Nature Reserve, near the Dead Sea, was closed to visitors because of the risk of floods. Nature reserves in the North, including the Ayoun stream leading to the Tanur waterfall, were still closed yesterday after the heavy rain, but are expected to reopen today.

The Mt. Hermon ski site, closed since the weekend because of heavy snow, reopened yesterday. Site manager Eli Sagron said the accumulated snow on the lower slopes had reached a depth over 1.3 meters, with nearly 2m. on the peak — the biggest accumulation in the past few years.

Meanwhile, Mekorot reported that Lake Kinneret rose by another 5 centimeters yesterday as a result of the strong flow from the Jordan River and other streams. The level, however, is still more than 2m. from its maximum mark.

Summertime Law passes first reading

By LIAT COLLINS

The Summertime Law passed first reading in the Knesset yesterday. The bill calls for summering to be in force from Saturday night March 22, at midnight, until September 13. The bill was presented by Interior Minister Eli Shais (Shas).

It passed by a 51-41 vote with one abstention. To ensure it passed, the coalition turned out in force, including the premier and most ministers.

MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) demanded Shais reveal the survey his ministry carried out which shows the majority of the public, including religious Jews, favor having summertime for a longer period.

Shais asked for a short period citing, among other things, the difficulties facing religious Jews who need to pray in the mornings before work.

Also yesterday, the Third Way executive met to discuss the Golan Heights and said the party would not be able to stay in a government which harmed Israel's sovereignty on the Golan.

The party will continue a public information campaign together with the Golan Heights Residents Council to promote more settlement there. It intends raising the Golan Heights Law in the Knesset. The law would require a 61 MK majority and a plebiscite to endorse any territorial concessions in areas under Israeli sovereignty.

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NEWS

in brief

Israel, Canada sign research funding pact

Israel and Canada signed an agreement yesterday to provide \$3 million each in funding for the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation (CIIRDF).

Canadian Foreign Trade Minister Art Eggleton and Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky signed the agreement in Jerusalem. The fund is expected to encourage firms to take advantage of the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement, which came into effect January 1. The projects already approved for funding are largely in the biotechnology and information technology fields.

David Harris

Chazan meets Women's League

A four-member delegation of the Women's League, led by Harriet Lainer, met yesterday with MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz), co-chairperson of the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women, to discuss their work and hear about potential projects and causes to adopt.

Chazan said she was impressed with the work the organization carries out, particularly at a time when many groups are suffering from funding problems and working on a tight budget. Among the ideas she raised is a shelter for battered women to serve the harder sector, whose abuse victims often cannot rely on the help of their families or friends.



Harriet Lainer

Liat Collins

Youth caught without license gets heart attack

Ashdod Magistrate's Court Judge Varda Meroz showed little heart for 18-year-old Meir Ben-Haim, caught driving his friend's car without his license last week, which was only fitting since Ben-Haim suffered a heart attack after he was stopped by a policewoman.

Ben-Haim, who has a congenital heart defect, was stopped by policewoman Molly Kogan, who immediately summoned an ambulance when Ben-Haim collapsed. He was later diagnosed to have suffered a heart attack.

Meroz sentenced him to a NIS 600 fine and suspended his license for eight months.

Itim

IAF chopper pilot makes emergency landing

The pilot of an IAF Cobra attack helicopter made an emergency landing in a field in the Jordan Valley yesterday, fearing his craft had malfunctioned and he was in danger of crashing.

Military sources said the pilot managed to bring the two-seater Cobra down normally, but that technicians had arrived on the scene to try and determine the nature of the suspected malfunction. It was not clear whether the air craft was in danger of crashing, or if the warning signal was a mistake.

Arieh O'Sullivan

Media blamed for negative image of Russian women

By ABRAHAM RABINOVICH

Some 44 percent of the Israeli public believe that many female immigrants from the former Soviet Union are employed in providing sexual services and 65 percent attribute other negative qualities to them.

The poor image of Russian-speaking immigrant women was the subject yesterday of a symposium sponsored by the Zionist Forum and the Israel Women's Network.

Prof. Galia Golan of the Hebrew University, who presented the results of a survey conducted among 500 veteran Israelis, said the negative aspects of the poll were balanced by the feeling of the overwhelming majority of Israelis that Russian immigration was a positive contribution to the country. For most Israelis, the negative image was derived from the media, she said, and not from personal contacts.

A change in media reporting and increased contacts between immigrants and veterans will change that image, said Golan.

The Forum and the Women's Network have embarked on a year-long campaign aimed at improving the image of Russian immigrant women, a sector which has significantly upgraded Israel's academic and cultural levels in recent years, through the presentation of personal stories in the media, symposiums and other events.

Dr. Dafna Lamish of Tel Aviv University said that a study of the Israeli press in the last two years had shown a propensity to display stories linking Russian-speaking women immigrants with prostitution, with being the victim or perpetrator of violence, and with drunkenness and other deviations from social norms.

Rabbis filmed taking bribes for conversions out on bail

By BATSHEVA TSUR

Two rabbis detained for allegedly taking bribes to speed up conversions are currently under house arrest. They were released on bail Sunday, after being held for 12 days.

This emerged yesterday when police officers briefed the Knesset State Control Committee on the scandal.

The committee convened at the request of Roman Bronfman (Yisrael Ba'aliya), who said most of those affected by the conversion laws are immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

"These are people who considered themselves Jewish all their lives, even if they were not halachically correct," Bronfman said. "They want to join the Jewish people as full members now."

The police said the investigation is continuing and that they had tracked down eight people who had allegedly bribed the rabbis, Michael Dushinsky and Binyamin Bar-Zohar.

The two suspects are not part of the organized court system, said Rabbi Eli Ben-Dahan, head of the rabbinical courts, after viewing part of a Channel 2 Fact program

in which they were exposed in an undercover film by Ilana Dayan.

"A gloomy picture of the difficulties involved in obtaining a conversion emerged as Dina Yabolsky, principal of an ulpan for conversion, spoke of the trials and tribulations faced by new immigrants from mixed marriages. She said she knew of two cases where students had been approached to give bribes of \$10,000 each.

The root of the problem, she said, is that it takes a year before the court is even prepared to consider a conversion case. The immigrants are kept in a state of tension and

then often refused conversion. Ben-Dahan admitted that, in 1996 alone, only 300 people - out of 1,180 who applied - had received permission to convert.

Committee chairman Ran Cohen (Meretz) said the committee would meet with the chief rabbis, whose representatives failed to appear at yesterday's meeting, and discuss the possibility of facilitating the conversion process.

"It is the long waiting process that leads a hand to all kinds of alternatives, including the alleged scam," Cohen said.



A crane yesterday prepares to lift a huge concrete block that will be used to smash some 100,000 pirate CDs.

Pirate CDs get squashed

By HELEN KAYE

Yesterday morning, a few dozen representatives of local record companies, the Israel Federation of Mediterranean Music, ACUM, and the Israeli branch of the International Federation of Phonographic Industries watched in grim satisfaction as a huge concrete block on the end of a crane pounded some 100,000 pirate CDs into splinters. A bulldozer completed the destruction of what were mostly pop and rock discs.

The haul was the result of numerous police and customs seizures last year, but it is no more

than a drop in the bucket when it comes to the pirate CD industry, which accounts for about 25 percent of the NIS 400 million annual local turnover.

This represents sales and royalties for both local and foreign artists, but whereas only one in four CDs by foreign performers is pirated, pirate versions account for three out of every four local recordings.

According to industry sources, Bulgaria, Ramallah and Hebron are the major sources for pirate discs. Increasing technological sophistication is also making pirate CDs harder to identify.

ACUM general manager Ran Kedar said that because of the pirate industry in the PA, the US is on the verge of blacklisting Israel for the theft of intellectual copyright. John Fenerty, economic officer at the US Embassy, said independently last week that "piracy is costing us billions of dollars worldwide. The administration has decided to make the enforcement of laws relating to all intellectual property rights a major priority."

As in the case of pirate radio stations, the legal system is largely apathetic to copyright theft and delivers a slap on the wrist at best, an ACUM spokesman said.

Abbas: Islamists plotted to kill me

ABU DHABI (Reuters) - Chief Palestinian negotiator Mahmoud Abbas said yesterday that Palestinian police had foiled an assassination plot against him last week.

Abbas said Palestinian police received information on a group of three people planning to assassinate him and detained them a week ago. "We do not want to get into the details at this time," he told Reuters.

when asked who was behind the plot. Abbas, a close aide to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, said the three men belonged to "Islamic trends," but would not elaborate.

Abbas, on a visit to the United Arab Emirates, said Palestinian police were questioning the men. Police sources in Gaza refused to comment.

Protest meetings disrupt rail service

By DAVID RUDGE

Passenger rail services were disrupted for two hours yesterday morning due to mass meetings held by the 1,300 employees of Israel Railways.

Management said the temporary walkout, between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., prevented five trains, mainly on the Tel Aviv to Haifa and north line, from running as scheduled.

A spokesman for the railways service said management had denounced the disruptions because of the harm it caused to passengers at a time when more and more people are using trains.

"They could have held this meeting at a time when it would not have affected services to the public and our freight customers," said the spokesman.

Last week, the workers staged a 24-hour wildcat strike, which paralyzed railway services, in protest over plans to restructure the railways.

Under the plan, the railways service is to be separated from the Ports Authority and split into two government companies - one dealing with passenger and freight services and the other with infrastructure and assets.

The workers fear that the planned restructuring will pave the way to privatization and could lead to their rights being eroded. The management spokesman said a meeting was held between workers representatives and National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon last Thursday.

He said the workers were assured they would be consulted over any proposed changes and all steps would be coordinated with them. Furthermore, he said, they were given assurances that their rights and benefits would not be harmed under the separation plans.

Management warned it would take legal steps through the labor courts if the disruptive action by the workers continued.

MK calls on Swiss Speaker to block firing of bank worker

By LIAT COLLINS

MK Avraham Heraschson (Likud) sent a telegram yesterday to the Speaker of the Swiss parliament, asking him to prevent the dismissal of Christopher Meili, the bank guard who exposed the destruction of documentation of accounts owned by Jews killed in the Holocaust.

"Don't be a part of Meili's dismissal," wrote Heraschson, who heads the Knesset subcommittee on Jewish property restitution. "The man did a good deed and exposed a terrible truth. Don't harm the messenger, prosecute

those responsible for the terrible destruction of evidence."

Meili was fired from the UBS bank after the directorate decided he should not have reported the destruction of the documents to the Jewish community.

Heraschson invited Meili to visit Israel as a guest of the committee through contributions by Holocaust survivors.

During Heraschson's recent visit to Switzerland, it was decided to establish a joint parliamentary committee to find solutions to the question of the dormant bank accounts whose owners were killed in World War II.

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Mifal Hapais



The family of China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, observes his body lying in state at a funeral ceremony in Beijing yesterday. Later a funeral cortege carried Deng's body past crowd-lined streets to a state cemetery to be cremated. (Reuters)

Emotional farewell for Deng

BEIJING (Reuters) — China cremated paramount leader Deng Xiaoping yesterday after his successor President Jiang Zemin and the elite of the ruling Communist Party bowed before the body of the man who transformed the nation.

State television showed their leader to China's millions for the first time in three years, his face pale and puffy, his body dressed in a Mao suit, draped with the red hammer-and-sickle communist flag and showered with flower petals.

Human rights was among the major topics US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said would be raised in meetings with China's leaders after she arrived yesterday on the last stop in her nine-nation tour.

US officials have said Washington does not expect Deng's death to bring any quick improvement in China's human rights and plans to proceed with a UN resolution faulting

Beijing's record.

In a lingering display of pomp-filled rites that Deng had expressly forbidden, it showed his designated heir Jiang, and most of the party elite, wearing black armbands and white paper flowers of mourning in their buttonholes, make three traditional bows of respect to the body.

"Deng looked at peace," the Xinhua news agency said.

In front of the body in the military hospital where it has lain since Deng died last Wednesday at 92 was a bouquet presented by his wife, Zhao Lin, and their children, with a silk streamer carrying the words: "We will love you forever." Deng's heir, Soviet-trained technocrat Jiang, looking ill at ease, shook hands with Deng's weeping family but said nothing.

A white van bedecked with black and yellow ribbons, the colors of mourning, carried Deng's body at a stately pace from the hospital to

Babaoshan cemetery in western Beijing where Chinese communism's heroes are traditionally laid to rest.

"Scatter Hot Tears for Comrade Xiaoping," read a banner with black characters held up by one group of people. "Go gently, Xiaoping," read another.

Deng's ashes will be scattered at sea. Analysts said the officially choreographed display of emotion appeared intended to paper over cracks already appearing among the party leadership within days of Deng's death.

"This type of overstatement seems to be a decision to fight over the corpse... to use it for as much mileage as possible," said Sinologist Geremie Barme. "Something's brewing." Deng's ashes were taken to the cavernous Great Hall of the People on Tiananmen Square where 10,000 people are to attend a memorial service today and Jiang is to read the eulogy.

Palestinian kills tourist in Empire State shooting

By RICHARD PYLE

NEW YORK (AP) — A Palestinian gunman fired into a crowd on the Empire State Building's 86th-floor observation deck, sending tourists diving for cover and stampeding toward exits. A Danish musician was killed and six other people were injured before the gunman shot himself in the head and later died.

The wounded were a French couple, an Argentine and a Swiss, and two Americans.

The gunman's passport identified him as Ali Abu Kamal, a 69-year-old Palestinian who came to the United States from Cairo on Christmas Eve. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said. The passport indicated Abu Kamal was from Ramallah, and was born in Jaffa.

The gunman died without regaining consciousness five hours after the shootings at one of the world's best-known tourist attractions.

Abu Kamal was an English teacher from Gaza City. (See story below.) Witnesses said Abu Kamal muttered something about Egypt seconds before he began firing shortly after 5 p.m. Sunday onto the panoramic, outdoor deck that surrounds a large, windowed room on the 86th floor.

"I heard a loud popping noise," said Jean-Luc Will, 40, a French tourist visiting New York with his wife, Catherine, and two sons, 10 and 13. "I thought at first it was little child playing with fireworks. There was one shot, then two or three seconds passed then three shots. pop, pop, pop." Police said a 27-year-old Danish musician was killed.

Authorities would not immediately provide his name, but the *Aalborg Stiftstidende*, a Danish newspaper, identified him as Christopher Burmeister, from Gjele, a Danish village near Aalborg. Newspaper reports said he was about to be a father and played guitar in a rock band, the Bush Pilots. He lived in Copenhagen, the capital.

In critical condition at Bellevue Hospital were the dead man's American friend, identified as Matthew Gross, 27, of Montclair, New Jersey, who was shot in the head; Mario Carmona, 52, of Mendoza, Argentina, in critical but stable condition; and a Swiss man, 30, both shot in the shoulder.

Patric Demange, 44, and Virginie Demange, 36, of Verdun, France, both shot in the buttocks, and Hector Mendez, 35, of the New York City borough of the Bronx, shot in the right leg, were listed in satisfactory condition at St. Vincent's Hospital. The French

couple's 16-year-old daughter was unhurt but was treated for mental shock, authorities said.

The *Daily News* said the French family was being comforted by a French-speaking doctor, and expected to make a quick recovery.

Gerard Guntner, 43, of Jersey City, New Jersey, said he found a man with a bullet wound in the head, and tried to help him by cradling his head in towels. "He was bleeding profusely. He was coughing blood. I took the towels and wrapped them around his head. I just said, 'Hang in there,'" Guntner said.

The *New York Post* said the wounded person helped by Guntner was the gunman.

Belgian businessman Stef Nys, 36, said he saw the gunman shoot himself in the head and fall to the floor just outside the window of a souvenir shop. A stunned Nys noticed that the elderly shooter's dentures had popped out of his mouth.

"I have never seen so much blood in my life, but the most scary part was when people started to panic," Nys said. In the rush for the exits, two children were hurt when knocked from parents' arms, and four women suffered minor injuries.

Police weren't sure of the significance of the gunman's remarks about Egypt. A city police terrorist

task force and FBI agents were investigating, Giuliani said. Police Commissioner Howard Safir said the shooter apparently acted alone and fired seven shots.

The man was carrying several Arabic-language documents and a receipt showing the purchase of a 380 caliber Beretta semi-automatic pistol in Florida last month, Giuliani said.

Howard Rubenstein, a spokesman for the Empire State Building, said a security camera taped Abu Kamal after he bought a ticket in the ground floor lobby and rode an escalator to the elevator entrance a floor above. The tape was turned over to police.

Rubenstein said the building, which attracts three million visitors a year to the observation deck, would review its security measures. But he said management was satisfied with its current procedures even though they do not include metal detectors or bag searches.

The 102-story Empire State Building was the world's tallest when completed in 1931. It has long since surrendered that title to other edifices, yet it remains the quintessential Manhattan skyscraper.

Its worst disaster occurred July 28, 1945, when a US Army B-25 bomber crashed into its 79th floor, killing three plane crewmen and 11 civilians.

Shooter 'distracted over losing savings'

GAZA (AP) — The gunman in the Empire State Building attack was distraught over losing his life savings of more than \$300,000 and had no ties to Palestinian radical groups, his relatives said yesterday.

Relatives of Ali Abu Kamal, 69, yesterday erected a white mourning tent outside his one-story home in the seaside Rimal district in Gaza City. Men made a wooden frame for the tent, designed to hold about 150 chairs.

Abu Kamal's daughter, Linda Abu Samra, 35, said she could not believe her father, an English teacher for nearly 50 years, would resort to violence. "I'm in shock. I can't believe my father carried out this act," she said, crying.

The gunman's son-in-law, Marwan Abu Samra, said Abu Kamal was a quiet man and had no ties to Palestinian militant groups.

In fact, Abu Kamal had been a victim of Islamic militant vigilantes. In 1992, he was kidnapped by Islamic Jihad and severely beaten. Wall graffiti signed by the group at the time accused Abu Kamal of having an extra-marital affair and violating the laws of Islam.

Yesterday representatives of the US Embassy in Tel Aviv visited the family and asked questions about Abu Kamal's background, the family said.

Abu Samra said his father-in-law had left for the United States two months ago with plans to invest his savings there and eventually moving his wife, four daughters, their husbands and his two sons from Gaza to America.

However, Abu Kamal called home Sunday and said he had financial problems and could not send tuition money to one of his sons who is studying civil engineering in Russia, the son-in-law said.

Abu Samra said he believed his father-in-law was distraught over losing his life's savings.

"I think the reason (for the shooting) was not political," he said. "My father-in-law was a quiet man. He was going to the states to invest some money. I think a man that age cannot accept that he loses more than \$300,000 after 50 years of work."

Pope to visit Lebanon in May

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) — Pope John Paul II will make a long-awaited visit to Lebanon on May 10-11, three years after cancelling a planned trip for security reasons in the wake of a church bombing, the Vatican said yesterday.

The visit will be the first by a Pope to the country in modern times.

Chief spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls announced the latest date in an already busy 1997 schedule of Papal visits after the Pontiff received Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

He said the Pope would preside over the ceremonial close of a synod of the Lebanese Church held at the Vatican in 1995 during his two-day weekend visit to Beirut.

The Vatican called off a planned five-day Papal trip in May 1994 after the bombing of a Maronite church north of Beirut in which 11 Sunday worshippers were killed and 59 injured.

The Pope had been expected to visit the biblical cities of Tyre and Sidon during the coming trip, but Navarro-Valls said he would stay in the capital.

Vatican sources said the trip was limited to the capital for security reasons. The visit would include a mass and a meeting with young people in Navarro-Valls said.

The Pontiff, who often speaks out in favor of Middle East peace and dreams of visiting the Holy Land by the year 2000, is expected to call for a comprehensive settlement.

The Vatican criticizes both the Israeli and Syrian military presence in Lebanon.

The globe-trotting "Pope of the Poor," the most-traveled leader of the Roman Catholic Church in history, was told by his doctors after an operation to remove his appendix late last year that at 76 and with delicate health, he should slow down.

His agenda for this year, however, is already packed. The Pope is due to visit Sarajevo on April 13, another long-awaited trip, and spend 30 days in his native Poland in early June.

Other visits in 1997 include Prague, Paris and Brazil.

Bubis says Rifkind outrage overdone

BONN (Reuters) — The leader of Germany's Jewish community said yesterday that outrage in Britain over a German newspaper reference to British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind as a Jew was completely overdone.

Ignatz Bubis, chairman of the central council of Jews in Germany, said the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's* (FAZ) mention of Rifkind's Jewish background may sound worse to English-language speakers than to German-language speakers.

"In the English language it may be considered a profanity to call someone a Jew," Bubis said. "But in German that is not the case. It depends on the context. And in the

context of the FAZ article, that was clearly not the case."

The remark dominated British media at the weekend, taken up with a lingering distrust of Germany that dates back to World War II.

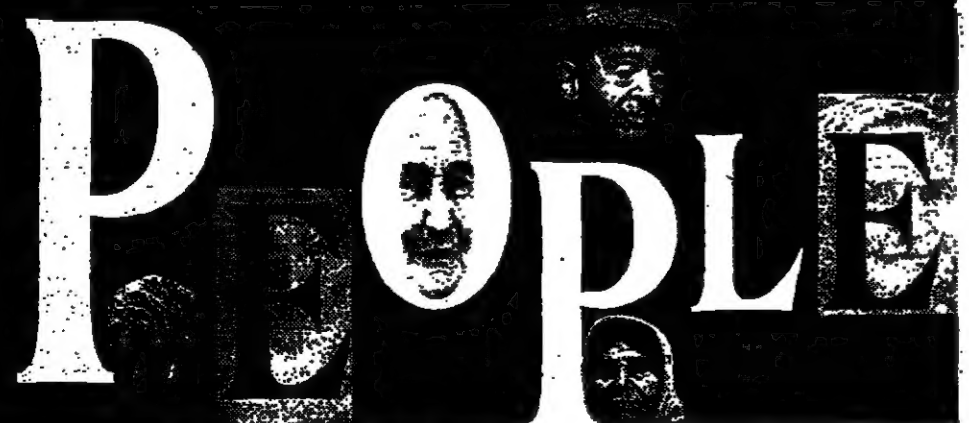
"The journalist who wrote the story was trying to point to an irony about Rifkind quoting Luther," Bubis added. "It was perhaps an unfortunate choice of words, but the reaction is completely overdone." Bubis, a Holocaust survivor, is the highly respected leader of Germany's vestigial Jewish community of some 50,000 members.

He has never hesitated to criticize remarks or actions insulting

to the German Jewish community.

German journalist Michaela Wiesel, writing about a speech made by Rifkind last week, had concluded in the newspaper: "As if he was not completely convinced by his own words, the Jew Rifkind concluded — ironically, apologetically — with a quote from Luther, delivered in German: 'Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise.'"

Former Conservative minister David Hunt, chairman of the British branch of the inter-parliamentary Council Against Antisemitism, said the comment echoed "the language of Hitler" and that he had written to the speaker of the German parliament.



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Netanyahu's Meretz

The Land of Israel Front, a loose formation of right-wing members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition who oppose his policies, held an "emergency meeting" yesterday. The phenomenon of full-blown rightist opposition to Netanyahu, which would have been unthinkable before the election, could well become an integral part of the Israeli political scene.

Netanyahu's break with the Right came in stages. First, after some stalling, he met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, even though few of the conditions he had originally set for such a meeting had been met. Then came the Hebron agreement, in which Netanyahu not only handed over most of the city — second only to Jerusalem in its Jewish historical significance — but locked his government into the Oslo Accord's series of three "further redeployments."

With the Hebron agreement, peace process proponents declared the "Land of Israel" movement to be dead, as did many rightists themselves. This movement, however, may now be recovering from its initial shock at being "betrayed" by Netanyahu, whom they thought of as one of their own.

MK Michael Kleiner (Geshet-Likud), a vocal opponent of the Hebron agreement and one of the 17 MKs who voted against it, chaired yesterday's emergency meeting. The group has three cardinal demands regarding Jerusalem: build on Har Homa, build in area "E-1" (linking Ma'aleh Adumim and Jerusalem), and build Road 45, which will improve access to Jerusalem from the north.

These are, in fact, modest demands. The group has pointedly decided not to demand the building of a Jewish neighborhood at Ras al-Amud, an area hemmed in by Palestinian neighborhoods. All three are projects that might be supported by a Labor government. The Har Homa project, in particular, was strongly backed by Labor ministers, and was delayed by non-political court cases against it.

In general, the current demands of the Land of Israel Front do not go beyond the government's own guidelines. Gone is the expectation of new settlements; now all that is sought is a continuation of the rate of expansion and building of bypass roads, which also occurred under the Rabin government. It is no surprise that the disappointment on the right over Netanyahu government's not doing more than a Rabin government, is turning to a sense of betrayal with the realization that it is doing less.

In an interview published in *Ma'ariv* last Friday, Yitzhak Shamir minced no words in expressing this feeling. "It is a fact," says

Shamir, "that [Netanyahu] is acting against the principles of the Likud. He has no principles." Shamir seems almost jealous of Arafat. "He's succeeding. He's progressing. Where are we? We are retreating."

So what is Shamir's alternative? He feels that in the end the peace process that began in Madrid when he was prime minister could have led to an agreement with the Palestinians. But an agreement, for Shamir, was not necessarily the main objective. As he fondly recalls his days in a unity government, "Then we did not lose a thing. There was a big aliya. We moved forward economically and improved our security. Peace? We don't have peace today either."

These are hard times for Shamir, because these times are all about giving in, with the questions being how much and in return for what. Even the Land of Israel Front is not demanding that the giving stop, but that it be minimized and that Netanyahu's demands for something in return — the concept of "reciprocity" — be enforced. Shamir himself seems to have given up any pretense of trying to influence events, and is content with the goal of keeping his principles intact.

The rest of the "Land of Israel Front," however, seems to be adjusting to the role of internal opposition — something akin to what Meretz was to the Labor government. Just as Meretz was constantly snipping at Rabin's heels to make sure he did not stray too far to the right, Netanyahu's internal opponents are trying to corral him from straying too far to the left. One difference, however, is that Meretz was a separate party, while most of Netanyahu's rightist opposition is in his own party. Another is that Meretz was more effective over time at steering the government leftward, while the Land of Israel folks seem to be mostly playing catch-up.

The Israeli right could do worse than to learn from its rivals on the other end of the political spectrum. It is a healthy thing for Netanyahu to have a vigorous, pragmatic faction to his right. Such a faction can only strengthen Israel's negotiating position, provided it focuses on truly important issues, not just "hot-button" items that may be less relevant.

The Land of Israel Front is right to wince at what, for them, seems to be pragmatism run amok. Some may even yearn for a leader like Yitzhak Shamir — whatever his faults, you knew where he stood.

But it would be a mistake for Shamir's ideological compatriots to emulate him. To be effective, they too must be pragmatic, as comfortable as it may be to keep one's principles in pristine condition. The challenge facing them is to maintain the balance between core beliefs and their limits in a post-Oslo world.



Say it ain't so, Natan

Buried in the deluge of news copy following the death last week of Deng Xiaoping was a story that brought the China issue home to Jews.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported on February 20 that Israel and China had "agreed to boost bilateral trade and economic cooperation" during the visit to Israel by Chinese Vice Premier Li Lanqing.

Even as the movement to focus on the human rights situation in China has grown in the past couple of years, the increasingly cozy ties between the Jewish state and China have not been troubled by any Israeli or Jewish scruples about dealing with a regime aptly described as "the last of the great dictatorships of this century of wicked dictators."

Some have argued that Israel's position as a small country surrounded by enemies justifies its dealing with evil regimes in an effort to break its isolation. That made sense 20 years ago.

But today, as the peace process continues, Israel is no longer isolated. And since even the Likud government has embraced Oslo, it can no longer claim that the country's survival depends on a policy of making friends with anyone who will deal with the Jewish state.

Israel might be able to afford a moral foreign policy if it wanted one. Much like the US on this same issue, it doesn't.

Separating China from Iran is a major goal of Israeli foreign policy. The Iranians are reportedly getting aid from the Chinese for their nuclear and missile programs. Ironically, at the same time, the Chinese have been cooperating on other military technology projects with Israel.

But it was the second paragraph of the JTA dispatch that stopped me dead in my tracks.

It described the meeting between Li and Israel's Minister of Industry and Trade. According to the ministry's statement, Natan

JONATHAN S. TOBIN

Sharansky expressed disappointment that the level of trade between Israel and China wasn't higher.

Both the JTA story and a similar dispatch from *The Jerusalem Post* Foreign Service spoke of the cooperation planned in a wide variety of industries, especially electron-

Tell us you're still an ardent advocate of human rights everywhere

ics and telecommunications. From the point of view of human rights advocates who have been pointing out China's repression of religious believers as well as its widespread use of slave labor from its own gulag — the laogai — in its export industries, this is unsavory stuff.

Israel is far from unique in seeking to profit from trade with China, but that just means being as amoral as everyone else.

Natan Sharansky is a hero, one of the most famous of the refuseniks. At his trial and sentencing 20 years ago when a Soviet court doomed him to decades in the gulag, his ringing assertion of Zionism challenged us to speak out in defense of all Jews trapped in that antisemitic tyranny.

But what made Sharansky really dangerous to his Communist jailers was that he was more than just an advocate for Jewish rights.

Sharansky spoke out on behalf of all victims of Soviet Communism, Jewish or not. He was a one-man model for the sort of selfless human rights activism that has characterized American Jewish groups who have been outspoken on non-Jewish human rights issues

like Bosnia and Rwanda.

WHEN he met with Li and angled for more Israeli involvement in the Chinese economy, did Sharansky remember the countless victims of the Beijing regime? Did he spare a thought for the Chinese prisoners languishing in cold cells in the laogai, perhaps clutching the local equivalent of the miniature volume of the Psalms that Sharansky cherished in the gulag? Did he inquire whether any of the Chinese firms that export \$160 million worth of products to Israel employ prisoner-slave labor?

Did he ask about the release of courageous Chinese dissidents like Wei Jingsheng? Did he make a nuisance of himself by talking about human rights in the way so many Americans who deal with the Soviets did when Sharansky languished in Soviet prison camps? Apparently not.

Perhaps Sharansky knows nothing of the laogai, documented in books by dissident hero Harry Wu and others. I hope this is the answer. Or perhaps he just doesn't care. Perhaps he now thinks that Israel's political and economic strategies outweigh all moral considerations, as some world leaders said of their own policies when Russian Jews were the victims.

If so, he should say so openly, and put the lie to everything his life once stood for. At least then we won't have to labor under the illusion that heroes still walk among us.

The struggle for human rights in China may be a sidebar to the Deng funeral story, but in the coming months and years it will grow in importance.

This is a fight a man like Natan Sharansky ought to be part of. He could be the one to finally raise questions about Israel's dealings with China and make a difference.

The writer is executive editor of the Connecticut Jewish Ledger.

A bit of humility

MARWAN BISHARA

The countdown for the Labor party primaries has started, with Ehud Barak making important strides toward claiming the leadership. Media estimates have him leading comfortably over Yossi Beilin.

The reason Barak is considered most capable of defeating the next Likud candidate for the premiership. Why? Because he is tough, an army chief of staff who would erase the wimpiness of Shimon Peres and steer the party back onto the track of Yitzhak Rabin.

This, at least, is the impression that dominates the party ranks. They are wrong on both counts.

Fifty years after independence, Israel no longer needs a soldier to lead it. The IDF is more than capable of defending its borders at this point in the peace process. Israel's complex regional and world relations, its sensitive negotiations with its neighbors require a man with convictions and a clear vision. Running a \$95b. trade-oriented economy requires knowledge and experience, both of which Barak lacks.

Barak is no Rabin. True, the late prime minister was also a soldier; a man of borders who led the IDF into the West Bank and conquered Jerusalem. But three decades later he had the courage to embrace reconciliation and accept the Oslo agreements out of conviction.

This would not have happened had he not listened to Shimon Peres, the man Barak is indirectly discrediting, who realized the importance of expanding Israel's frontiers beyond the limitations of its borders.

INSTEAD of lecturing Netanyahu from the Knesset podium on the merits of humility, Barak could use a little humility himself and learn some lessons from the man he intends to replace as Labor

Ehud Barak needs to start talking to the Arab electorate

Barak needs to state why he is better than Benjamin Netanyahu for Israelis, both Arabs and Jews. If he favors more compromises with the Arabs, he needs to specify them. If he favors acting tougher with his negotiating partners, he must also clarify. Because if he should act tough in the Labor primaries, he will have to swallow his words for Arab support in the final round.

With the Likud mustering more than two-thirds of the Knesset votes behind the Oslo process, who needs a Barak-led majority of 61 votes? Besides, Barak was behind most of what went wrong with the Peres policies. From West Bank closures to the Grapes of Wrath, Barak's advice revolved around security solutions.

The Palestinian conflict with Israel today is political. It takes a general to see it in merely military terms.

Needless to say, neither the Oslo process nor Shimon Peres satisfies Arab voters' political aspirations, let alone Palestinian national demands. This is a political war in which battles are won and lost — but at the least the process is moving forward.

The Palestinian citizens of Israel — and the Palestinians in general — have decided to fight their war politically. And it is no longer clear that Barak's next battle is ours.

The Arabs in Israel are better organized than ever before; their identity is in healthier shape than ever. And as the peace process advances, their political agenda brims with items relating not only to the negotiations, but to their life and progress in Israel.

They reject classical Labor justifications for discriminating against them as citizens based on security imperatives, and they can translate their dissatisfaction into electoral power.

Unless Barak is planning to use the army, he had better start talking to the Arab electorate. And if the Mapainiks want to recapture the premiership — well, they don't need a tough figure. They need to figure out what they stand for.

The writer is a Palestinian author from Nazareth.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE AUGUSTA VICTORIA HOSPITAL

Sir, — I was astonished and dismayed to read in your article of February 11, "PA agrees to transfer burned boy to Hadassah" that Dr. Yitzhak Sever is quoted as having said that Augusta Victoria Hospital has been taken over by the PA. There is no truth whatsoever to this statement.

The Augusta Victoria Hospital is owned and operated by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), headquartered and registered as an international organization in Geneva. Managed and funded through the Department of World Service of the LWF, it has a Geneva-appointed board of governors for the hospital. The LWF has always been and continues to be in full compliance with all requirements under the law for operating a hospital in Jerusalem.

NOT CHARITY

Sir, — Batsheva Tsur's article "Prisoners of Zion living in poverty" (February 7) was very timely, as the Knesset was preparing to vote to draft a new law, proposed by MK Emanuel Zissmann, to provide pensions for former Prisoners of Zion. While the article is very much appreciated, it is important to point out a major oversight.

Prisoners of Zion and other activists received tremendous tributes from Israel and the Jewish world. Their relentless work enabled thousands of Soviet Jews to make aliya during the 1970s and '80s. Ms. Tsur wrote about the former Prisoners of Zion in the Soviet Union who, for some 10 to 20 years, struggled to create the Jewish movement in the USSR under the extremely difficult and dangerous conditions of the Communist regime and KGB oppression. For the years of work they did for Israel

Since 1950, the hospital has served Palestinians, especially refugees, with health-care needs. In the last two years, it has undergone considerable upgrading and repositioning in order to provide quality medical services to the whole population of a highest possible standard.

The commitment to the management and investment in the hospital by the Lutheran World Federation has never been higher, nor has its ownership been so vital. There has been no takeover by anyone of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of the LWF as an international organization with a service mandate.

REV. DR. DAVID L. JOHNSON, Representative, Lutheran World Federation, Jerusalem.

FAILED CONCEPT

Sir, — Studying World War I we are amazed that a handful of generals of limited ability were able to destroy an entire generation of European youth through the fixed "concept" of trench warfare. Now, for the past 15 years, the families of Israel and their sons are still captive to a failed concept that has brought untold tragedy and loss to Israel and to Lebanon, to the IDF, to the residents of the northern border and everywhere else, and to the chances of peace.

We are our own victims of a "concept" that can't distinguish between Palestinians 20 years ago, trying to take hostages to free PLO prisoners, and Lebanese Shi'ites (once our allies) who don't want Israeli soldiers in their country and who are willing to fight with the advantages of home territory and motivation, against an Israel army engaged in the wrong war in the wrong place.

The slaughter inadvertently by Israeli artillery of 100 Lebanese women and children taking refuge in a UN camp should have made a convincing statement about our self-defeating, fruitless continuing travail in that bloody land; yet the "concept" remains in place. Who has the courage to call out clearly, "the emperor is naked?"

In tribute to the boys who have been sacrificed let us strive to achieve a pull-out from Lebanon, now!

BURTON M. HALPERN

NETANYAHU AND CLINTON

Sir, — There is an incredible similarity between President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu that deserves attention.

Both statesmen are young and attractive and came into office with high ideals. Unfortunately, both made many mistakes and the local and world media were merciless in their extreme and sometimes brutal criticism. Now it seems that both have learned to overcome their mistakes and may indeed prove to be outstanding and great leaders... hopefully.

LLOYD MORRISON

Berlin.

EXPLANATION, PLEASE

Sir, — Could someone please explain the logic behind Prime Minister Netanyahu's moves to release terrorists with Jewish blood on their hands and his readiness to withdraw from the Land of Israel?

It seems that the Israeli public who elected him not to do these things deserves an explanation.

LEAH WOLF

Meitar.

Gotta love that jazz

By MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Not many people will give away an opportunity to be on the *Cosby* Show. And even fewer would pass up on being a regular guest on the show. But that is exactly what Dee Dee Bridgewater did last October. They called me when I was on tour in the USA and wanted me to start in two days. It was just impossible for me," she recalls.

The American-born Paris-based jazz singer and actress likes to plan her life well in advance. If that is possible. Which is why she also had to say no to a recent offer from Broadway. "I had a couple of offers but I can't do a Broadway show. I'm not free for that kind of commitment. For me it's always a question of the planning. I try now to be a little bit looser with my time but it makes me nervous."

And then there is the West End as well. "I'll try and see if I can do a guest run for two months as a lead in a musical. Something's coming. I know that, and I have no problems waiting."

But as much as she would like to act on stage and on both the big and small screen, Bridgewater's first love is jazz, and it is this love for jazz which brings her back to Tel Aviv for a concert with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra tomorrow.

Bridgewater did a jazz evening with the IPO a couple of years ago, hoping at the time that the event would pave the way to more regular appearances with symphony orchestras all over the world. But that has not yet happened. "I'll start to get a fair amount of propositions to do works with symphony orchestras and if these concerts go well maybe more offers will come," she says over the phone from Vienna where she was recently performing.



Bridgewater's newest release, a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, reflects her 'developing style that is comparable to Ella's.'

This time around Bridgewater devotes her program first and foremost to two jazz legends: Ella Fitzgerald ("Let's Do It" and "My Heart Belongs to Daddy") and Billie Holiday - with some extra arrangements by Lalo Schiffrin ("Autumn Leaves" and "The Shadow of Your Smile"), and also some pieces by Duke Ellington ("Prelude to a Kiss" and "Come Sunday").

She has just finished recording her newest disc, a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald. "It was quite a big undertaking. It will be a full release on Verve Records. The preparation took approximately two months then it was two weeks recording."

For Bridgewater, Fitzgerald is "the first lady of jazz. I'm now developing a style that is comparable to hers. She was an enormous inspiration for me and I felt a responsibility to do a tribute to her."

As for Billie Holiday, well "that's another story altogether. When I grew up I did not consider her to be one of the greatest in the business. But she could interpret a song in a way that nobody else could. But she is unfortunately one of the tragic figures of our time. She's an inspiration of things not to do, not to get into the negative downs of show biz, the drugs and the alcohol."

Bridgewater's greatest dream, however, is to get more involved in producing her own work, as well as the work of other artists. "I want to produce other artists' works. I want to do a wonderful dramatic role in a movie. I want to do more theater and more of what I'm doing now."

"But above all, I want to have more of a hands-on approach as a producer, to really converse with sound engineers, and have more of a say about the sound of my discs."

IN TUNE



Blur's efforts in their latest album prove it to be the most satisfying release yet.

Blur: Full steam ahead, backwards

By DAVID BRINN

When you're number two, you try harder. So after four albums of English guitar pop that paved the way for, but was then upstaged by, the Gallagher boys in Oasis, Blur has forged full steam ahead, backwards.

Championing the American do-it-yourself sound of Beck, Pavement and countless other underground-heroes, Blur has gone lo-fi while retaining its British essence.

Reminiscent of those mid-to-late-1960s albums by The Beatles in which they weren't afraid to mix styles, Blur's latest release is an admirable effort, if only partially successful. The opening track, "Beetlebum," is a *Revolver* era pop that will have you singing along in no time. Things don't get strange until "Country Sad Ballad Man" and "Death of a Party" with their folk a la Beck clanging rhythms.

Proving that you can't hide true colors though, tracks like "On Your Own" and "Look Inside America" brim over with classic rock melodies and vocals that are dead ringers for Mott The Hoople's Ian Hunter.

The closing combination of "Strange News from Another Star," "Movin' On" and "Essex Dogs" fall in their attempt to redefine space psychedelia. But despite the flaws, this may be Blur's most satisfying album so far.

- BLUR**
Blur
(NMC)
- 1997 GRAMMY NOMINEES**
Various Artists
(Hollywood)
- GREATEST HITS**
Slade
(Hollywood)

teeth and a string of number one teen anthems. They were one of the biggest bands to ever come out of England but they hardly raised a dent in the American market.

Spawning from the same glittery fishpond that bore The Sweet, T Rex and Gary Glitter, the quartet played basic rip-roaring rock anthems for the football and beer crowd. Twenty years later, bands like Oasis call them a major influence.

However, most of those top ten hits sound pretty dated today. With the exception of "Mama Weer All Crazee Now," "Gudbuy T'Jane" and "Cum On Feel The Noise" (it was a rather silly gimmick, now that I have to type it), the material should be locked away in a 1970s time capsule along with platform shoes and shag haircuts.

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15					
THIS LAST WEEKS ON			ARTIST	TITLE	
WEEK	WEEK	CHARTS			
#1	1	2	YEHUDA POLIKER	LIVE	
#2	12	9	V/A	BEST OF '96	
#3	8	26	RAMI KLEINSTEIN	COLLECTION	
#4	3	2	NONA	NONA	
#5	6	48	RITA	COLLECTION	
#6	2	48	SHLOMO ARTZI	TWO	
#7	17	15	SPICE GIRLS	SPICE	
#8	NEW	1	DAVID BOWIE	EARTHLING	
#9	23	2	OST	BREAKING THE WAVES	
#10	7	12	EHUD BANAI	OD MEAT	
#11	10	14	TONI BRAXTON	SECRETS	
#12	11	2	PRANA	GEOMANTIC	
#13	RE	1	ABBA	GOLD	
#14	9	10	RONIT SHAHAR	SHALOM LATMIMUT	
#15	5	14	V/A	SPIRIT OF THE WORLD	

Tower Records' top-selling albums for last week

Tower Records' top-selling albums for last week

War stories, from a female perspective

By HELEN KAYE

Feminism and war make a volatile mix. The result is the Guild Theatre production of Jodi Schenk's *Undiscovered*, a new English-language play that follows the lives of five volunteer nurses in an army hospital in England during World War I.

"I was reading Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August*," says Schenk, who's one of the five, "and I was struck very suddenly that so many people had died in a war that nobody even talks about any more. And as a modern woman in Israel who's expected to be involved - and I am - in what's going on, I wondered about the women in that war. They didn't have the rights and the freedoms that we have, and yet they were very valuable."

Amid the endless folding of linens, rolling of bandages and the care they give to the clearly endless stream of badly wounded men, the women learn to know each other and themselves.

"The war is an image," says *Undiscovered* director, Schenk's husband, Rob. "You get characters together and see how they discover one another in the face of reality that they know. It's the whole horror, we'd be paralyzed."

Minette (Prima Isigoff), is a

famous opera singer, and a refugee from Belgium with a husband somewhere on the Western front. Camilla Buchins plays the under-educated cookery Candace, a pregnant war bride. Lilla (Julia Garb) is aristocracy and a mystery while Francie (Schenk) revels in freedom far from home in the American mid-West. Matron Ashe (Jacqui Carmel), a seasoned hospital veteran and certified battle-axe, keeps them in line and on course.

"Of course World War I is a metaphor," Schenk agrees, "for loss of innocence, for enforced transition and for how you cope with it, a situation that we face time and again, directly or indirectly."

The Schenks immigrated from the US in 1990, days before the Gulf War broke out, "and people we'd never even seen before asked us 'can we help you?' and I wanted to be in the play," she says.

Three years ago they were among the five founding members of the Guild, established "so we could do the material we wanted," which included Schenk's plays - *Undiscovered* is the sixth - and other original pieces like *The Voice* by Isigoff, also a founding member, which won her a best festival award at the English drama Festival last year.

Undiscovered is at the Ra'anana Yad Lebanim tonight and Wednesday.

THEATER REVIEW

'Dinner' hits the funny bone

By NAOMI DOUDAI

Sophisticated, boulevard entertainment, rib-tickling farce" say the rave reviews for this latest British export.

Rib-tickling, yes - if that's where your funny bone is. Sophisticated, no, unless there are boulevards in Blackpool where the flip-mouthed fun and fast-



'Don't Dress for Dinner' is full of steamy situations and sizzling cracks.

DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER

By M. Camoletti, Director, Collin McIntyre
Barrie Stacey Productions, London

processed wit of this far-from-subtle show could easily have been born.

Don't Dress for Dinner, a highly commercialized comedy of errors, is the most outrageously sexy successor to Britain's oldtime tongue-in-cheek "bedroom" farce. A rattling, boisterous structure of vaudeville repartee, verbal slapstick, and West End tricks, it certainly levels with the ticketholder's outlay in terms of steamy situations and non-stop, sizzling cracks.

If laughs are what people pay for there is laughter enough here to recoup for the paid-for privilege

of being turned on, lightly, mindlessly and incessantly.

Tightly directed but not so consummately cast, performances, though lively and energetic, don't give out the charm needed to glamorize such a glut of amorous liaisons. One is left suspecting that this is not the same team that graced the much-vaunted hit in the West End.

CONCERT ROUNDUP

Emotional expression at both ends of the spectrum

Under the title "Berlin in Cabaret Mode," a program of music and background information was presented in the concert-lecture series "From the Twilight of Romanticism to the Dawn of Modernism," edited by pianist Tomer Lev.

Romanticism at its finest was represented by the young Richard Strauss's little-known songs composed between the ages of 16 and 35 - the ultimate of super-emotional expression.

As its antithesis, the evening

FROM THE TWILIGHT OF ROMANTICISM TO THE DAWN OF MODERNISM
Works by Richard Strauss, Franz Liszt, Paul Dessau, Hans Eisler, Kurt Weill, Ruth Maria Nikolat (mezzo-soprano), Tomer Lev (piano), string quartet: Ekkehart Lorensen, Natalie Gandelmann, Leonid Levano, Hillel Roit.

cabaret songs turned their backs on emotion: Kurt Weill's acid irony under a thin guise of mock-sensitivity, Paul Dessau's politically aggressive style, and Hans Eisler's tendentiously declamatory patterns.

The German mezzo-soprano Ruth Maria Nikolat performed the songs poignantly, with superb

command of the various, inflection-rich styles, though the pieces of the Lotte Lenya repertoire had better be omitted to avoid unfavorable comparisons.

As a concert-hall composer, on the other hand, an altogether different aspect of Weill's personal-to-become evident.

In his rarely performed String Quartet, nervous dissonances, restless energies, distorted melodic lines and tortured musical gestures substituted for what was discarded emotionally.

Hinde-mith carries the disillusionment with Ragtime from his Suite 1922, performed brilliantly by Lev.

A tantalizingly fragmentary lecture by David Witnum revealed sensational, well-documented facts and processes on the transition from musical creativity to music regimentation in Germany under the Nazi regime.

His chilling information on the not always tacit sympathies of contemporary intellectual circles with musical nationalism deserve a much wider exposure in full-length program on this still largely unfamiliar subject.

Israel Museum, February 18.
Ury Eppstein

AUTHENTICA
Works by Monteverdi, Lambert, Charpentier, Alessandro Scarlatti, Montecclair, Vivaldi, Lemoyne, Couperin - Israel Seminar Musicale

Gerard Lesne with his Seminario Musicale ensemble (Blandine Rannou - harpsichord, Bruno Cocset - cello, Pascal Montelheit - theorbo) - is a rare event.

Though French himself, the sonority of his voice and its singular clarity could, paradoxically, be appreciated best in the Italian selection. It was in pieces by Monteverdi, Alessandro Scarlatti and an Italian canzon by Montecclair that he permitted himself to let go and to allow his captivating voice to bloom in its full glory. This occurred, perhaps, because of the dramatic-extroverted character of this music. In the French works by Lambert, Charpentier and Couperin he sounded more restrained, underlining their intimate, chamber-like traits at the expense of a merely vocal display. Particularly enchanting was the extraordinary subtlety of nuances and delicacy of rendition.

Rannou's performance of harpsichord pieces by Forqueray was

admirably flexible and full of pep.

The songfulness and virtuoso playfulness of a Vivaldi dello sonata was displayed by Cocset.

Jerusalem Theater, February 15.

Ury Eppstein

"HULIN," A newly commissioned divertimento for orchestra by Israeli composer Haim Permon, was premiered by the Israel Sinfonietta under Uri Mayer at their "Classica" No. 5 series concert.

It is accessible - a loosely structured, rhythmic work, whose vigorous consonant sonority strikes a balance between French Impressionism and Soviet Realism.

Soloist Yaron Windmuller, lyric baritone, gave refined, understated, flowing performances of Bach: Cantata *Ich Habe Genuß* and excerpts from Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.

The Sinfonietta and music director Uri Mayer created an attractive and engaging presentation of Haydn's brilliantly high-spirited "Surprise" Symphony No. 94 in G major.

Beersheba Conservatory, February 22.
Max Stern

The Jerusalem Post & ZOA House
Friday Morning Forum
QUO VADIS?
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

HAIM RAMON, MICHAEL KLEINER,
MK Labor MK Likud/Gesher/Tzomet

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 10:30 a.m.
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BUSINESS

in brief

Indigo reshuffles senior brass

Newly announced changes in Indigo NV's senior management reflect the unsuccessful efforts the US-based management team has made in penetrating the US market, company chairman Benny Landa said yesterday.

Landa said that by hiring George Carlisle to replace Frank Steenburgh as president of Indigo America and by substituting the position of corporate president with an office of the president, the maker of short-run digital color printers will be better able to develop an aggressive approach to the US market. The office of the president will comprise the firm's four key executives, who will report directly to Landa. Wayland Hicks has stepped down as corporate president. Landa said that despite similarities in the European and US markets, sales in Europe have consistently exceeded sales in the US, indicating that the company's problems are internal.

Jennifer Friedlin

Turkey to buy Elta radar technology

The Turkish Defense Ministry has bought the Innovative Ground Penetration Radar System from Elta Electronics Industries to detect plastic and conventional mines, executives said. Elta's parent company, Israel Aircraft Industries, said the radar system, based on the EL/M-2190, is mounted on a remote-controlled vehicle capable of maneuvering over difficult terrain.

The system automatically detects mines and marks their position and trail. Executives said the radar sold to Turkey is similar to that bought from Sweden last year for deployment by its peacekeeping force in Bosnia. IAI would not quote the price of the contract, but industry executives said it was about \$3 million.

Steve Rodan

VW hands over bribe probe findings to police

Volkswagen AG said yesterday it has turned over the findings of its internal investigations to prosecutors probing allegations that employees at the German carmaker demanded and received bribes from suppliers.

A VW spokesman declined to discuss the content of the information, which was handed over to prosecutors in the nearby city of Braunschweig, and said the carmaker has not yet decided if it would make them public.

Reuter

Unemployment hits two-year high

Central bank cuts interest rates by 0.3%

By DAVID HARRIS

Unemployment increased by 0.4 percent in the fourth quarter last year to 7.3%, its highest level in the last two years, according to figures published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Meanwhile, the Bank of Israel announced yesterday it will cut its key lending rate for March by 30 basis points to 13.9%, pushing the aggregate cut since August to 3.1%.

The number of unemployed who were actively seeking work during the last quarter totaled 159,000 a week, 8.4% more than a year earlier.

There was a 0.5% increase to 8.8% in the number of women without work and a 0.2% increase to 6.1% among the male workforce.

There has been an average quarterly unemployment increase of 2.5% since April, compared to reductions of 3.3% in the equivalent 1995 period.

According to this calculation, female unemployment went up an average 4% last year, after declining 5.5% in 1995.

The change was less dramatic for men: up 0.8% last year, down 0.4% in 1995.

The overall unemployment figures for 1996 show an average

weekly reduction on the 1995 totals.

Of the overall civilian workforce, 6.7% were officially registered as unemployed, down 0.2% on the previous year.

While the number of jobless men increased 6.3%, female unemployment decreased 6.5%.

Israel's civilian workforce numbered 2.177 million in the last quarter, a 2.5% rise on the 1995 figure.

In the same period, the adult population increased 3%.

Of the country's entire population, the workforce fell 0.2% to 53.6%.

Business services were the fastest-growing sector during the survey period, with an 9.8% increase to 194,000 employed, followed by transport and communications (124,000, up 8.2%), and construction (up 6.7%).

However, employee numbers continued to drop in the agricultural sector (down 11% to 51,000).

Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel last night denied that the increase in unemployment is a result of the central bank's continued tight monetary policy.

Since its 1996 peak of 17% at the start of July, the bank has reduced interest rates by less than a percentage point in all but one month.

This decision was taken in light of the current positive monetary policy, according to a statement from the bank.

Frenkel made it clear that foremost in his mind is the need to meet the government's 1997 inflation target of between 7% and 10%.

Additionally, the bank said, it has to take into account the ongoing slowdown in economic activity.

The central bank said its tight monetary policy has led to a substantial reduction in the inflation rate during the latter half of last year.

In June the annual rate was some 15%, but by December it was down to 7%, with the actual annual total at 10.6%, which is just over the government-set target.

The central bank used the opportunity to remind the Finance Ministry of what it sees as the urgent need to reduce the budget deficit, something the Treasury failed to do last month when it registered a NIS 1.283 billion fiscal deficit.

The Treasury is hopeful it will record a deficit lower than the predicted NIS 1.3b.-NIS 1.4b. for February, a senior ministry source said on Sunday.

Shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange rallied ahead of the

4:30 p.m. announcement.

The Mishkanim Index closed up 0.99% at 260.47, and the Maof top 25 shares ended the day at 269.67, a 1.08% rise.

The continuing Bar-On affair probably also had an effect on share prices.

In currency trading, the shekel lost 0.269% of its value against the dollar, which closed the day at NIS 3.3420.

"There is no doubt that the policy has hindered and is damaging to the economy," said Teva general manager Eli Hurvitz ahead of the central bank's announcement.

"High interest rates and a recession are not good for the economy and especially for industry."

Labor costs are very high here, approximately 35% - 40% higher than in England, according to Hurvitz.

A company that expands at our growth rate can deal with this, he said, but over a long period of time, if costs remain high, there will be a tendency to manufacture elsewhere.

The bank should have reduced interest rates by 2% in one move, rather than in the bit by bit fashion currently being implemented, said Manufacturers Association president Dan Propper.

Meridor to reopen Hapoalim sale tender

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Finance Minister Dan Meridor yesterday announced his decision to reopen the tender for the sale of a controlling share in Bank Hapoalim.

Potential buyers of the government's holdings in the bank, the country's largest, would be expected to forward their proposals within 45 days of the new tender's official launch, which is expected to take place "early next week," Meridor said.

It will be managed by MI Holdings, the state-owned company in charge of selling government assets.

The government intends to sell at least 25% of its stake in the bank, which amounts to 20% of the bank itself.

The government will also see to it that the buyer's stake will not exceed its remaining holdings in the bank, a Treasury communiqué said.

An additional, undisclosed stake will be left aside for the bank's employees.

So far the Bank of Israel's supervisor of banks has been officially approached by only one prospective bidder, namely the Eliezer Fishman-Jeffrey Keil group.

The Arison-Claridge-Dankner Group, which has recently announced its intention to join the race for Hapoalim after parts of it surprisingly resigned from the previous government's tender last year, has yet to officially approach either MI Holdings or the Bank of Israel's supervisor of banks.

The group's sudden retreat from the tender, not long after the change in government following last year's elections, was interpreted as a reflection of its grim assessment of the country's economic prospects due to the perceived obstacles ahead in the peace process.

Following its decision to reverse its previous decision, Claridge's Jonathan Kolber said his group's newly positive attitude stemmed from the improved political atmosphere following the signing of the Hebron agreement between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

If successful, Bank Hapoalim's sale would be a landmark accomplishment in terms of Israel's hitherto lackluster privatization process.

Earlier this week it emerged that the government's original intention - to sell a 17% stake in Bank Discount this quarter - would have to be rescheduled for April due to the bank's inability to meet some requirements in time.

Teva to raise more than \$100m. in US bond issue

Pharmaceutical leader's fourth quarter net up 61%

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries has preliminary plans to raise more than \$100 million this year via a bond issue in the US, the company's finance manager Dan Susskind said at a press conference yesterday.

The country's largest pharmaceutical firm announced a 61.2-percent increase in fourth quarter net profit to \$30.3 million compared to the corresponding quarter last year. This is equivalent to 49 cents earnings per share, higher than the average forecast of analysts, which predicted earnings of 45 cents.

The board of directors decided to increase the quarterly dividend allocation to NIS 0.30 per share, compared to NIS 0.20 in the first three quarters of the year.

Teva completed 1996 with a rise in net profit to NIS 88.3m. from NIS 74.3m. The figures reflect the acquisition of the US generic drug manufacturer BioCryst via the pool-

ing of interest accountancy method, which calculates Teva's past record as if BioCryst was always part of it.

In the first half of this year, Teva is expected to come to a final decision regarding the flotation of Teva bonds, said Susskind, adding that the idea is "appealing." The proceeds of the issue will increase the company's long-term financing.

"To date we have raised capital for more than five years; this issue will be for a longer period," said Susskind. Teva raised \$70m. from a syndicate of European banks last year. The loan is intended to increase the company's financial exposure in Europe.

Last year was crucial in Teva's development and expansion worldwide. Teva general manager Eli Hurvitz said. The company ended the second half of the year with revenues reflecting an annual rate of more than \$1 billion, about a quarter of which derive from the acquisition of European and US companies in the last two years.

Since 1994, Teva has completed the acquisition of Biocraft, acquired the British generic pharmaceutical firm APS Berk, Biogal in Hungary and ICI in Italy.

Teva completed last year with revenues of \$953.8m., up 17.5% from 1995 (including Biocraft). Fourth quarter revenues rose to \$277.7m. from \$230.2m. Overseas revenues rose to \$204.8m., equivalent to 74% of total revenues.

Commenting on the recent consolidation of the US generic drug market, Hurvitz said Teva is preparing itself for the acquisition of additional companies. "We have a portfolio of every firm in the US, which we may be interested in," Hurvitz said. "In some cases we have even commenced negotiations."

The new drug Copaxone is due to come on the market in the first quarter of 1997, said Hurvitz. Teva and the Weizmann Institute, which developed the drug, have appointed an arbitrator to resolve their dispute over Copaxone royalties.

COMPANY RESULTS

General Bank net slightly down

Israel General Bank completed the year with a drop in net profit to NIS 12.6 million from NIS 14.7m. in the previous year. Fourth quarter net profits fell to NIS 4.19m. from NIS 4.24m.

Management announced that earnings were affected by a drop in profits from capital market activities. Profits from financing operations before provisions for doubtful debts decreased to NIS 37.4m. last year from NIS 41.76m.

Operating income went up to NIS 56.4m. from NIS 47.81m. The bank's operating expenses for last year increased to NIS 16.8m. from NIS 69.44m. Last year, Baron de Rothschild sold 52.4% of the bank to Investec, a banking group owned by South African investors.

Galit Lipkis Beck

Israel Trade Bank's net profits decrease

Israel Trade Bank's net profits decreased 67% in the fourth quarter to NIS 66,000 from NIS 203,000 in the corresponding quarter last year. During 1996, the bank's net profit increased to NIS 974,000 from NIS 119,000 in the previous year.

The bank's management reported that fourth quarter earnings were affected by a one-time growth in salary expenses, mainly due to the allocation of NIS 286,000 worth of options to the bank's general manager. The decrease was also a result of an increase in provisions for doubtful debts to NIS 628,000. Total assets grew to NIS 571m. from NIS 468m.

Galit Lipkis Beck

First Int'l Mortgage Bank posts 29.8% profit rise

The First International Mortgage Bank, a subsidiary of First International Bank, reported a 29.8 percent growth in net profits last year to NIS 31.7m. from NIS 24.4m. in 1995.

Net return on equity on an annual basis increased to 10.5% from 8.8%. Fourth quarter net profits fell to NIS 5.78m. from NIS 6.68m.

The bank's management reported that annual earnings had been affected by an 11.4% increase in financing income to NIS 75.5m., resulting from a rise in volume of activity. Provisions for doubtful debts fell 33.1% to NIS 5.2m.

Galit Lipkis Beck

Profits up at Atzmout Mortgage and Development

Atzmout Mortgage and Development, a subsidiary of First International Bank, announced a 23.7% growth in net profits to NIS 14.5m. from NIS 11.7m. Net return on equity on an annual basis increased to 11.6% from 10.3%.

The bank reported a drop in fourth quarter net profits to NIS 2.26m. from NIS 3.26m. in the corresponding quarter in 1995. The drop was mainly due to a growth in provisions for doubtful debts to NIS 1.73m. from NIS 549,000.

Galit Lipkis Beck

TENDERS

The Israel Electric Corporation wishes to purchase the following goods/services:

TENDER	DESCRIPTION	Cost of tender documents, inc. VAT (non-refundable)
589916	Contract for Supply of Sulfuric Acid and Caustic Soda Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER: 1. Manufacturers must have prepared a quality control manual which also includes a schematic description of the manufacturing process and the quality control methods employed. The manual must be submitted together with the proposal. 2. A certificate from the Israel Standards Institution attesting to compliance with at least Level C of the Ministry of Defense or with Standard ISO-9003 or the equivalent from the Israel Electric Corporation, to be submitted together with the bids. 3. The material must be shipped in suitable containers and labeled in compliance with the law and bidders must submit authorizations of such. Period of Contract: The contract and rights according to the agreed terms will be for a period of two years, with the option of an additional year at the same terms. This option can be taken up by the Electric Corporation at any time during the contract period.	NIS 936
590901	Contract for the Supply of Light Bulbs Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER: A certificate attesting to compliance with the standard of the tender specifications. Period of Contract: The contract and rights according to the agreed terms will be for a period of two years, with the option of an additional year at the same terms. This option can be taken up by the Electric Corporation at any time during the contract period.	NIS 351
592079	Silica Grease Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices	NIS 351
587340	Contract for the Supply of Telephones with Loudspeakers Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER: Period of Contract: The contract and rights according to the agreed terms will be for a period of two years, with the option of an additional year at the same terms. This option can be taken up by the Electric Corporation at any time during the contract period.	NIS 351
593820	Contract for Service and Guarantee for Fax Machines PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER: Bidder must be authorized by the manufacturer to provide service and supply original parts. Period of Contract: The contract and rights according to the agreed terms will be for a period of six months, and if the trial period is satisfactory, it can be extended by the Electric Corporation to a year.	NIS 351

Last day for submitting bids: March 24, 1997 at 11 a.m.

590417	Supply and Installation of Lifting and Shifting Equipment Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER: 1. The bidder must participate in a tour for suppliers on March 2, 1997, at 9 a.m. in the Electric Corporation's diesel generator warehouse, Rehov Hanesah, Haifa Bay. 2. Participants in the tour must present their ID cards at the gate. 3. Bidders must confirm participation by phone with Mr. S. Mor, Tel. 04-864-6721 (at least 3 days prior to the tour).	NIS 351
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Last day for submitting bids: March 30, 1997 at 11 a.m.

CONDITIONS APPLYING TO THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS (in addition to conditions specified for each tender):

- A guarantee of 5% of the bid total, in the form of a personal check, should be attached to the bid, except for tenders requesting technical information only (Stage A).
- Participation in a tender is also subject to complying with the preliminary conditions detailed in the Tender Regulations 1993, Para. 8(a) 1, 2, 3 (i.e., registration as required by law, compliance with mandatory specifications, and the holding of the permits required by law for businesses).
- The Electric Corporation reserves the right to allow a bidder who has not submitted relevant documents, permits, licenses, etc., to submit them within a specified time that will be set by the Corporation.

The tender documents may be obtained on Sunday - Thursday, at the Market Research and Tenders Dept., 11 Sderot Palyam, Haifa, between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, on submission of a receipt, showing payment (non-refundable) of the cost of the documents into the Corporation's account at the Postal Bank. Payment slips are obtainable at the above address (Tel. 04-681-54554).

Before purchasing the tender documents, they may be perused on Sunday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 noon, at the offices of the Market Research and Tenders Dept. at the above address, and at the Sales Unit, 90 Rehov Yigal Alon, Tel Aviv, Ashdod Building, Entrance B, Floor 1, Tel. 03-565-4879, 03-565-4641.

Bids should be submitted in a sealed envelope, and be placed in Tenders Box No. 1, in the Palyam Building, Haifa (address as above) by the last date for submitting bids, as stated above.

No undertaking is given to accept the lowest or any bid.

NOTE: In appropriate cases, the Electric Corporation will give preference to suppliers, in accordance with the Tenders Regulations (Preference for Locally Produced Goods, and Obligation to Extend Commercial Cooperation).

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)				
Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 250,000)	1.825	1.825	2.125	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.850	0.750	1.000	
Yen (10 million yen)				
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (24.2.97)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS				
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	Banknotes	Rep.
U.S. dollar	3.3111	3.3653	Buy	3.3407
German mark	3.3646	3.228	Sell	3.3420
Pound sterling	1.9754	2.0073	Buy	1.9944
French franc	5.3888	5.4758	Sell	5.4384
Japanese yen (100)	0.5851	0.5848	Buy	0.5908
Dutch florin	2.7123	2.7561	Sell	2.7332
Swiss franc	1.7674	1.7858	Buy	1.7741
Swedish krona	2.2569	2.2035	Sell	2.2038
Norwegian krone	0.4481	0.4554	Buy	0.4627
Denmark krone	0.5036	0.5036	Sell	0.5006
Finland mark	0.4858	0.5261	Buy	0.5225
Canadian dollar	0.5177	0.6710	Sell	0.5981
Australian dollar	0.8903	2.4297	Buy	2.4633
S. African rand	2.5802	2.4989	Sell	2.5049
Belgian franc (10)	0.8570	2.6219	Buy	2.6225
Austrian schilling (10)	2.3038	0.7587	Sell	0.9882
Italian lira (1000)	0.8700	0.9725	Buy	2.8339
Jordanian dinar	1.9534	2.5521	Sell	2.0116
Egyptian pound	4.8100	4.8200	Buy	1.0235
ECU	0.9400	1.0200	Sell	3.8682
Irish punt	3.8311	3.8925	Buy	5.2610
Spanish peseta (100)	5.2398	5.3244	Sell	2.2568

*These rates vary according to bank.

**Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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European champions Germany arrive

By DEREK FATTAL

Germany, the current undisputed soccer-masters of Europe, landed in Israel yesterday ahead of tomorrow evening's (kickoff 18:45) friendly international against the national squad at Ramat Gan.

There are three notable absentees from the squad announced by coach Bert Vogts a week ago.

South African-born Sean Dundee, the Bundesliga's current top scorer was forced to pull out of the German team due to injury sustained at the weekend, while Stefan Reuter (Borussia Dortmund) and Bayern Munich's Mehmet Scholl were also compelled to withdraw.

Captain Jürgen Klinsmann appeared delighted by the prospect of visiting Israel, when speaking to reporters yesterday.

"We hope to show the people here a good display of football," the amicable center forward said. Klinsmann indicated that he was looking forward to meeting his former Tottenham colleague Ronnie Rosenthal again, and on a more serious note stressed the importance of the game in strengthening ties between the two countries in the light of a difficult past.

The German squad will travel Jerusalem today and will pay a visit to Yad Vashem and the Knesset.

The West Germans played in Tel Aviv in 1987 winning 2-0 with

goals scored by Lothar Matthäus and Olaf Thon. The two sides have yet to meet on German soil. Wednesday's match has attracted massive press coverage in Germany, for what will be the first contest between Israel and a united Germany. A corps of over one hundred journalists is accompanying the European champions for what is the only friendly encounter before Bert Vogts' side resumes its World Cup qualifying campaign against Albania in April.

With the German season resuming less than two weeks ago after its long winter break, there has been some criticism by domestic coaches at the decision to bring the players to Israel at this time. Given the fact that the match was arranged more than a year ago such arguments seem to lack foundation. Whatever, there can be no doubting that Vogts is approaching the match with anything less than the total professionalism that has characterized his management career at international level.

When the match was originally arranged, Israel coach Shlomo Scharf enthused at the prospect of pitting his side against one of the world's greatest soccer nations. Following the recent sharp decline in the Israeli side's form, the fixture appears to be turning into a nightmare for Scharf.

With yesterday's refusal by Celta Vigo club president Horacio Gomez to release Haim Revivo for

the match, Scharf has been forced to cobble together a team to face the Germans without his three best players. Eyal Berkovic has been denied permission to play by Southampton, and captain Tal Benin is injured. In addition Nir Klinger, who could have added some badly-needed leadership at the back, was unable to take part in the squad's first training session held yesterday, and is doubtful for the opening line up.

Scharf has announced one change to his original squad, with the recall of goalkeeper Rafi Cohen for Betar Jerusalem's Itzik Kornfein.

The Israeli coach looked grim-faced after yesterday's training session, remarking that the players seemed tired and disorganized. While Scharf conceded that the Germans would no doubt dictate play on Wednesday, he hoped that with proper effort and sufficient motivation his side could still harm the visitors on the break.

Despite all the hype in Germany, there has only been muted interest from Israel's public, with less than 2,000 tickets purchased. While the atrocious weather has played apart in dampening enthusiasm, most Israelis recognize that without the host-squad's skilful midfield trio the contest is likely to be totally one-sided. The fact that the match is being broadcast live on television is hardly likely to cause a stampede through the turnstiles



Coach Bert Vogts pulls back midfielder Dariusz Woz during Germany's first training session at Ramat Gan last night. (Reuters)

and recognizing this the Israel Football Association is planning to distribute over 10,000 free tickets to ensure a respectable gate.

This afternoon, the two nations' under-21 sides will be in action at Herzliya. Israel coach Yizhak Shumi expects his squad to be at full strength and is confident that

they can gain a result that will boost the confidence of the first team. The match kicks off at 18:00.

The Israeli squad for tomorrow's match: Goalkeepers: Rafi Cohen (Hapoel Haifa), Golan Malul (Maccabi Petah Tikva).

Defenders: Assi Domb (Betar Jerusalem), Arik Bennado

(Maccabi Haifa), David Amsalem (Betar Jerusalem), Amir Shaleh (Maccabi Tel Aviv), Gadi Brumer (Maccabi Tel Aviv), Felix Halton (Hapoel Tel Aviv).

Midfielders: Ran Ben-Shimon (Hapoel Haifa), Alon Harazi (Maccabi Haifa), Yossi Abukasis (Betar Jerusalem), Shmuel Levy

(Betar Jerusalem), Avi Nimni (Maccabi Tel Aviv), Itzik Zohar (Betar Jerusalem), Alon Hazan (Maccabi Haifa), Nir Klinger (Maccabi Tel Aviv, captain).

Forwards: Eli Ohana (Betar Jerusalem), Ronnie Rosenthal (Tottenham), Alon Mizrahi (Bnei Yehuda).

Minister: Islamic image could damage Istanbul's Olympic bid

ISTANBUL (AP) — The Turkish sports minister yesterday urged IOC officials not to let Turkey's image as an Islamic country hurt Istanbul's bid to host the 2004 summer Olympic games.

"Those who are to vote for the 2004 games should not mistake us for Algeria or Iran," Bahattin Seker said yesterday, commenting on an evaluation report by the International Olympic Committee.

Seker belongs to the center-right True Path party, part of the Islamic party-led coalition which has governed Turkey since July.

Technically, Istanbul had a good chance of being selected into the first

five, he said. The decision is due next month.

"But if the selection is marred by issues other than technical considerations, then they will push Turkey into other alternatives such as the Asian Games or the Islamic Games," Seker said.

Seker last year refused an offer by an Iranian official for Turkish athletes to compete in the Islamic Games, citing Turkey's secular status. Nearly all of Turkey's population is Muslim.

The Islam-inspired Welfare Party, which holds the premiership, has been pushing for a greater role for Islam in Turkish society.

Rome, Athens and Stockholm emerged as front runners in the IOC report released Thursday. A record 11 cities are bidding to stage the Games.

In its appraisal of Istanbul, the IOC report said 22 of the 34 sites would be new facilities, leaving a strong sports legacy for the city. But it said Istanbul was in need of better separation of athletes from judges and referees.

The contenders are to be whittled down to four or five on March 7, with the final selection on September 5.

Other cities contending to host the games are Cape Town, Buenos Aires, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, San Juan, Seville, Spain and St. Petersburg.

German F.A. denies offer to co-host World Cup finals with England

BONN (Reuters) — A transcript of a TV interview given by German soccer federation (DFB) president Egidio Braun proved that his remarks about sharing the staging of the 2006 World Cup with England were misunderstood, a DFB spokesman said on Monday.

The DFB denied that Braun had offered in a television interview to share the staging of the 2006 World Cup finals with England.

Michael Novak, spokesman for the DFB, said that Braun had said nothing about sharing during an interview with ARD television on Sunday night.

He said a report circulating in the British media on Monday that Braun had made such an offer as the result of a journalist's incorrect interpretation of Braun's remarks.

"It was a misunderstanding of what Braun said," said Novak.

"At no point during the (ARD) interview

was the subject of sharing the finals even brought up." According to a transcript of the interview, Braun was asked if UEFA had already made a decision to back the German bid.

"UEFA had always assumed that Germany would be the only (European) country bidding and had always said 'We support Germany,'" Braun replied.

"But after the European championship the English came. And I said to Franz Beckenbauer on January 14 'It is time that we talk with England about whether we can have one European (bid) or whether we should not have a split (bid).'"

Novak said the word "split" that Braun was referring was whether Europe would have one country bidding or two, and not whether Germany and England would share a joint bid.

"There was never any suggestion that he was

talking about sharing the World Cup," Novak said. "It was clear that he was talking about a split in bidding for the Cup, not in sharing it."

Other countries besides England and Germany are also expected to bid for the finals in nine years time, including Australia, South Africa, Morocco and a possible joint-venture from Argentina and Brazil.

Both Germany and England are to push their individual claims when UEFA's Executive Committee meets in Geneva on April 17.

UEFA will only back one bid, and a public vote will be held in June. It appeared that UEFA had given their backing to Germany without any prior consultation.

That situation changed following a protest from the English F.A. who believe their hand has been strengthened by growing animosity towards a possible German bid from German pressure groups.

Chang beats Woodbridge in Memphis final

LOCAL SCENE

MEMPHIS (Reuters) — Top seed Michael Chang ended nine years of frustration at the St. Jude tennis tournament on Sunday by beating Todd Woodbridge in the finals of the \$825,000 ATP Tour event.

Chang, the world's fourth-ranked player, had reached the semifinals at Memphis four times since turning pro here as a 16-year-old in 1988, but had never reached the final.

He made the most of his first appearance, however, beating the eighth-seeded Australian 6-3, 6-4.

Chang, who celebrated his 25th birthday on Saturday, pocketed \$120,000 and earned enough computer points to jump into third spot in the ATP Tour rankings.

Chang improved to 11-2 lifetime against Woodbridge, who won last month's Australian Hardcourt event in Adelaide to trumpet his emergence as a singles player.

Woodbridge and compatriot Mark Woodforde are the world's top doubles team.

"It is such a thrill for me to win here," Chang said.

"This is definitely one of my favorite tournaments to come to year after year," Woodbridge, winner of eight Grand Slam doubles titles, had an easier trip to the finals than Chang.

Olympic champion Lindsay Davenport won for the first time since last August by beating Lisa Raymond 6-4, 6-2 on Sunday in the finals of the \$164,250 IGA Tennis Classic in Oklahoma City.

The top-seeded, 30-year-old Californian received \$27,000 in claiming her eighth career victory.

She won three tournaments in 1996, but nothing since winning the Olympics in Atlanta and a \$450,000 tournament in Los Angeles.

Leading rankings issued by the ATP Tour yesterday: 1. Pete Sampras (US) 5,491 points, 2. Thomas Muster (Austria) 3,709, 3. Michael Chang (US) 3,395, 4. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia) 3,367, 5. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia) 3,265, 6. Marcelo Rios (Chile) 2,413, 7. Richard Krajcik (Netherlands) 2,365, 8. Thomas Enqvist (Sweden) 2,264, 9. Wayne Ferreira (South Africa) 2,203, 10. Carlos Moyca (Spain) 2,171, 11. Albert Costa (Spain) 1,871, 12. Boris Becker (Germany) 1,863, 13. Andre Agassi (US) 1,857, 14. Tim Henman (Britain) 1,733, 15. Todd Martin (US) 1,723, 16. Marc Rousset (Switzerland) 1,707, 17. Felix Mantilla (Spain) 1,681, 18. Jim Courier (US) 1,633, 19. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 1,561, 20. Magnus Gustafsson (Sweden) 1,488.

By HEATHER CHAIT

The Slovak tennis association announced yesterday that the Davis Cup tie in which they will host Israel from April 4-6 will be played on clay courts in the capital, Bratislava.

Clay is traditionally Israel's worst surface, and to that the opposition — Karol Kucera and Jan Krosak — respectively 73 and 92 in the ATP Tour rankings issued yesterday.

Local rankings this week show Eyal Ran on 143, Oren Motevassel at 209, Eyal Elich on 242, Raviv Weidenfeld at 243, Nir Weigand at 269 and Noam Behr on 286.

Meanwhile, Dmitri Tomashevich from Uzbekistan, seeded sixth, won the second stage of the Club Hotel Ellat satellite, which was moved from Ashkelon to Jaffa yesterday.

Tomashevich beat France's Julien Vardet, a qualifier 7-5, 6-0. In the semi-finals, Tomashevich beat Motevassel 7-6, 6-4 and Vardet beat Claude N'Goran from the Ivory Coast 6-4, 6-1.

Rugby: The league is nearing its end and ASA Tel Aviv is in a powerful position in the A League, having won all their games. The B

Slovakia to host Israel's Davis Cuppers on clay

league is a closer situation with Kibbutz Yizre'el leading on 10 points but threatened by Ra'anana on 8 with one game in hand.

In Cup games, Tel Aviv has eight points but has completed their allotted games which means that Ra'anana (8), Galil Elyon (6), Jerusalem (4) and Yezreel (4) are still on the trail.

Fixtures for this weekend are: Yizre'el vs. Netanya (Yezreel, 1pm), Ra'anana vs. Galil Elyon (Sportek, noon) and Rishon LeZion vs. Jerusalem (Sportek, 1:30pm).

Sailing: Olympic bronze medalist Gal Friedman again proved his dominance, by winning the Funboard event of the 12th International ASA Boardsailing Championships in Eilat. Friedman left Amit Imbar in second place with Gadi Mintz third.

Roi Hemo won the mistral category with Ariel Vardi and Liat Israeli behind him.

Germany's Emily Lux won the women's mistral with Michal Hein and Miri Rami second and third.

Squash: The national championships are well under way at the Herzliya Squash Center with Ronen Goldberg the top seed and player to beat. One hundred entries were received in the cat-

gories: men, seniors (35+), veterans (45+), masters (50+) and grand masters (55+).

The finals will be held on March 1 at Ra'anana Squash Center.

TA Marathon: From the natural surroundings of last week's Ein Gedi Race to the bustling city of Tel Aviv whose half marathon will be held on Friday, March 14. Besides the 21.1km race, there will be 6km popular and competitive events, and a 2km children's race.

Registration has begun. Call: 03 5613322.

Badminton: This sport in Ra'anana is going places. After officials met with mayor Zeev Bilsky to impress upon him the interest in badminton, the response was a promise of more coaches and greater backing. To prove it, exhibition games were held last week with Bilsky present and next week Ra'anana will host a schools championship. For info: (03) 6494956.

Soccer: Being captain of the national team and a newlywed husband to Yafit still leaves Tal Benin not fully occupied. So this week, he joined the Itzik Zohar ranks, as radio announcer for Haifa's local station. His first guest on the program — his mother, Ety.

West Ham escapes bottom three with 4-3 win over Spurs

LONDON (AP) — Julian Dicks scored from the penalty spot in the 72nd minute — his second goal of the match — to lift West Ham to a 4-3 victory over cross-town London rival Tottenham Hotspur last night.

The victory was the first of the year for West Ham and the first win since November and lifted the club out of the bottom three in the English Premier League, the relegation zone.

Teddy Sheringham gave Tottenham a 1-0 lead in the eighth minute. Dicks leveled the match in the 21st and a minute later Paul Kitson gave West Ham

a 2-1 lead. Darren Anderton equalized in the 29th minute, but West Ham jumped ahead again 3-2 on a 38th minute goal by John Harrison.

David Howells equalized again at 3-3 in the 53rd, setting the stage for Dicks' winner.

West Ham has 25 points in 26 games, ahead of last-place Middlesbrough with 19, Southampton with 20, and Nottingham Forest with 24.

Tottenham remained in the middle of the standings with 32 points, far behind leading Manchester United with 54.

Spanish fan sends red off with red card

SEVILLE, Spain (Reuters) — A Spanish soccer fan, angered by refereeing decisions in Sunday's first division match between Sevilla and Logrones, ran on to the pitch and showed all three match officials a red soft drink can squashed into the shape of a red card.

Sevilla had two players sent off in the match and lost 4-1.

Afterwards, police had to intervene to stop the crowd from throwing objects at the referee and managers and to prevent a riotous charge against the president.

Sevilla's manager, Juan Carlos Losa, said he was "disappointed" by the referee's decisions.

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CRITIC'S CHOICE

THEATER

HELEN KAYE

Stakes are high in Beirut? You bet! Camer artist director Omri Nitzan has directed a savvy acted, very sophisticated, very witty and very impudent comedy of errors which exploits the benefits of peace without ever sermonizing. Dan Almagor's translation brings the jokes into the '90s while Ohad Shahar, Natan Danner, Ya'acov Cohen and Rami Baruch keep their aloft. Tonight on the Camer mainstage at 8:30. (Hebrew with simultaneous translation into English)

Don't Dress for Dinner, the long-running West End hit, farce by Marc Camoletti about adultery, cookery and tickery down on the farm, tonight in the Haifa Auditorium at 8:30. (English)

ENGLISH LECTURE

HELEN KAYE

"I Spy: the English Spy Novel" is the title of Alex Auswaks's lecture on the subject of those who write about the cloak-and-dagger brigade. Auswaks lives in Jerusalem, writes book reviews and was co-editor of *Red Herring*, the UK Crime Writers Association bulletin. Tonight at the Jerusalem British Council library at 8. (reservations 02-673-6733)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AIZENSTADT

Soprano Svetlana Babajanov sings arias by Verdi, Bellini, Puccini, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff tonight at the Enav Center in Tel Aviv

If Bach is your cup of tea then the Tel Aviv University's Gallery is the place to be tonight where the Tunes and Colors at the Gallery chamber-music series focuses on music by members of the Bach family. The program features a quintet by Johann Christian Bach and Yoav Talmi's arrangement of Johann Sebastian Bach's monumental *Musical Offering*. Performed by flutist Er'ella Talmi, harpsichordist Jocheved Schwarz and guest musicians (8:30).

The Israel Sinfonietta Beersheba and the Tel Aviv Museum invite music and art lovers to enjoy a com-



Svetlana Babajanov sings arias by Verdi, Bellini, Puccini, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff tonight at the Enav Center in Tel Aviv

ined cultural evening at the museum tonight. At 7 there will be a gallery talk in the museum followed by coffee, tea and cakes before the Sinfonietta's concert featuring the world premiere of *Hulin* by Haim Perlmutter and works by Bach, Mahler and Haydn. Uri Mayer is on the podium and admission to the museum and the concert is NIS 70.

The Sinfonietta repeats the program tomorrow in Ashdod and Thursday in Kfar Sava (8:30 p.m.).

TELEVISION

ELANA CHIPMAN

A three-part documentary series following the final days of the Russian House of Romanov, *The Last of the Czars* begins tonight on the Discovery Channel at 10. This year will mark the 80th anniversary of the last czar's abdication. The totalitarian inclinations developed by the last czars brought on the end of their 300-year reign. Warring, revolution, assassinations and scheming were an inseparable part of the aura surrounding the dynasty's final days. The epic history which affected the lives of so many will be shown using rare archive material, photos and interviews with specialists.

TV

CHANNEL 1

8:30 News flash
8:31 News in Arabic
8:45 Exercise Time
7:00 Good Morning Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV

8:00 The Book of Genesis
8:30 Art Workshop
9:00 Reading
9:30 Health

MIDDLE EAST TV

7:30 TV Shop
14:30 700 Club
15:00 Richard Scary

MOVIE CHANNEL

11:30 Convicts (1990)
(12)

13:05 The Man with the Golden Arm
(1950) - classic on

drug addiction with

Frank Sinatra (1945)

15:00 Special report on

The Ghost and the

Danish

15:30 In Defense of a

Man (1991) (12)

17:30 Larkia Moon

(1991) - life of

American Indians

before the white man

(1990) (12)

20:00 Sliders

20:30 Desperate

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CABLE

ITV 3 (33)

16:00 Cartoons

16:30 The Thirst of

17:30 From Day to

18:00 Amores

18:30 News in Arabic

19:00 Video Clips

20:00 News

20:45 Rumples of the

21:40 Showcase

22:15 Call Red

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PRIME TIME TV

1 2 3 4 6 8

19:30 News flash
20:00 News
20:30 Lotto results
21:00 Fact with
21:30 Gov Night
22:00 Nick
22:30 Dream On



Israeli peppers in China

Foreign Minister David Levy inspects green peppers during a visit to the Sino-Israeli demonstration farm in Beijing yesterday, as Agricultural Attaché Yugu Saris (left), Ambassador Ora Namir and Chinese officials look on. (Reuters)

Weizman begins three-day state visit to Britain today

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

As a former RAF pilot, President Ezer Weizman takes with him "a special feeling" as he and his wife, Reuma, begin a three-day state visit to the United Kingdom today.

"My entire life would have been different had I not served with the RAF," Weizman said yesterday. "We gained a great deal of experience from them which later helped us set up our air force."

Ties between Israel, the Zionist movement and the British, he said, had "many ups and downs." He noted that he had also studied at the RAF Staff College in 1950.

On arrival in London today, the Weizmans will be welcomed by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip and will stay at Buckingham Palace. They will meet other members of the royal family, including the Queen Mother, and Weizman will hold talks with the prime minister and the head of the opposition. He will also meet with members of the



Jewish community. Among the highlights of the visit will be a meeting with the current commander of the RAF and Weizman's tour of his former base.

The president and his wife will also see the famed Cairo Geniza at Cambridge University. The geniza will be brought to Israel in the summer and will go on exhibition at the Israel Museum.

The Weizmans are bringing the queen a unique gift - a very rare book about Palestine, acquired from an amateur private collector.

"We thought that a historical book about Palestine, written by an Englishman, would be an appropriate gift," Reuma Weizman said yesterday. "By sheer chance, we came across a book printed in 1650 in England which contains descriptions, many illustrations and numerous maps of Palestine at that time. The book was written by the clergyman, Thomas Fuller, B.D., who called it *A Pisga-Sight of Palestine*."

Weizman said they had consulted experts and source books to

establish the exact English meaning of the Hebrew word *pisga*. They established that it is generally considered to refer to the mountain from where Moses viewed the Promised Land, as defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary.

Douglas Davis adds from London:

When President Weizman arrives in London, he will also inspect members of the Scots Guards, who will be issued with commands in Hebrew for the occasion.

During the Weizmans' trip, Reuma Weizman, who spent 18 months in Britain in the immediate aftermath of World War II assisting with the rehabilitation of young Holocaust survivors, will visit the Diamond Riding Center, where handicapped children receive therapy based on horse-riding.

The Weizmans will also attend the unveiling of a statue of Raoul Wallenberg.

The queen is also expected to accept an invitation to visit Israel, possibly during the 50th anniversary celebrations next year.

Hizbullah issues threat of retaliation

By DAVID RUDGE

Hizbullah issued a thinly veiled warning yesterday that it will retaliate with Katyushas in the event of what it described as further aggression by Israel against the Lebanese people.

The threat came after Hizbullah accused the IDF and South Lebanese Army of responsibility for laying roadside bombs near Majdal Zoun, north of the security zone.

Hizbullah maintained that three devices "designed to cause maximum casualties" had been planted near a busy road junction not far from the village.

UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksel said two devices exploded harmlessly while sappers were checking the area and another was safely dismantled.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, meanwhile, visited the security zone last night in a show of support for the SLA. He met with Gen. Antoine Lahad and senior officers in Marjayoun and reiterated Israel's commitment to the force and residents of the zone.

He was also briefed on the situation in south Lebanon by OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine. He met with senior IDF officers and spoke with them about operations being carried out in the war against Hizbullah.

Hizbullah has also accused Israel of being behind the bombing which killed a woman in Frun, north of the zone, last Thursday.

The Lebanese government complained to the Grapes of Wrath monitoring group over that incident, charging that parts of the

bomb were manufactured in Israel.

Israel's representative to the group, established to supervise the understandings that ended the Grapes of Wrath fighting last April, rejected the allegations. The IDF Spokesman said that the monitoring group also rejected the allegations.

Reports from Lebanon quoting security sources said that only intense pressure from the Lebanese army and Hizbullah leaders prevented members of the organization from retaliating to that incident with Katyusha fire on the Galilee.

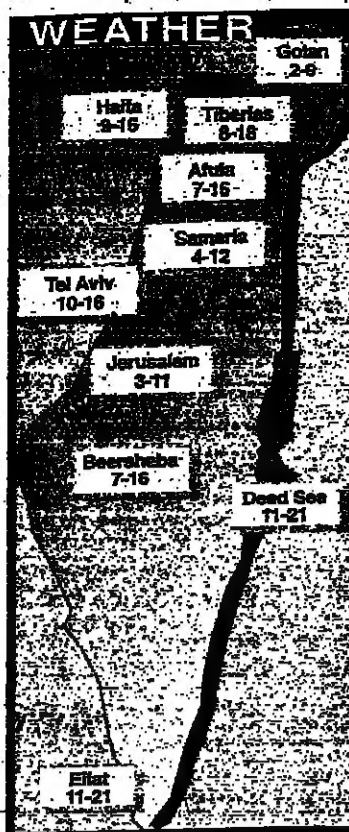
Mohammed Fnaish, a member of the Lebanese parliament on behalf of Hizbullah, was quoted in Beirut newspapers yesterday as saying that the organization would "make the enemy regret every single crime it has committed against the Lebanese people."

"The resistance has its own methods of assessing the situation and we will hit back," said Fnaish, who spoke at a memorial service for the woman killed in Haboush.

Another Hizbullah MP, Mohammed Ra'ad, spelled out the threat more clearly in comments in the Lebanese press, saying that the "resistance knows how and when to use Katyushas."

There have been unconfirmed reports that Hizbullah may have acquired Katyushas with a range of around 40 km. from Iran. If true, this would put Haifa's bay-side suburbs in range.

Hizbullah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said at the height of the Grapes of Wrath fighting that the organization possessed longer-range weapons which it would use when necessary.



AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	C	F	WIND
Amsterdam	10	50	12	54
Berlin	10	50	12	54
Buenos Aires	18	66	25	59
Chicago	18	66	25	59
Copenhagen	10	50	12	54
Frankfurt	10	50	12	54
Geneva	10	50	12	54
Hong Kong	18	66	25	59
London	10	50	12	54
Los Angeles	18	66	25	59
Madrid	18	66	25	59
Moscow	10	50	12	54
New York	18	66	25	59
Paris	10	50	12	54
Rome	18	66	25	59
Stockholm	10	50	12	54
Sydney	18	66	25	59
Tokyo	18	66	25	59
Vienna	10	50	12	54
Zurich	10	50	12	54

Winning cards

In yesterday's Chance drawing, the winning cards were the ace of spades, 10 of hearts, 10 of diamonds, and 10 of clubs.

Ministry complains over de Charette visit

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

Israel has lodged an official complaint with France over Foreign Minister Herve de Charette's allegedly promising to make an extended visit next week, but scheduling only a one-day stop.

Officials in Jerusalem said that during a private visit to France last month, Levy believed he had secured a commitment from de Charette to visit for two or three days, in an attempt to erase the bad impression left after last fall's visit by President Jacques Chirac.

During his visit, Chirac pushed an Israeli bodyguard, and spoke in the Palestinian legislature in favor of Palestinian control of eastern Jerusalem. Moreover, in the original program, Chirac was to spend virtually no time at the Western

Wall, while spending time at other religious shrines in Jerusalem's Old City.

However, when Levy became aware last week that de Charette would only visit Israel and the Palestinian Authority for a day during a March 4-6 regional swing also involving Syria and Lebanon, "he flew into a rage," a Foreign Ministry official said.

Levy insisted that the Foreign Ministry summon French Ambassador Jean Noel de Lacoste to complain.

Moreover, Ambassador to France Avi Pazner filed a similar complaint with the French Foreign Ministry, officials said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor said DeLacoste was summoned last week to the ministry, where "we expressed our discontent over changes in the

program for the visit."

Palmor said Paris had originally promised "a full state visit of two or three days."

"We don't mind what he does in the region once he is here, but instead of dedicating two or three days to Israel on a full-scale visit, he will be here for a 24-hour visit which will include a visit to the Palestinian Authority," Palmor said.

"Since there had been a promise [of a longer visit], the minister instructed the ministry to express his discontent," he said.

"I don't think we should beg de Charette to visit," one official said privately. "He can stay home. However as Levy became personally offended, the Foreign Ministry has decided to file a complaint."

Levy: Israel, Yemen discussing ties

By Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

Foreign Minister David Levy confirmed yesterday that Israel and Yemen are discussing establishing official ties through the opening of interest offices.

Speaking to Israel Radio during

a visit to China, he confirmed a report in *Yediot Aharonot* that Foreign Ministry Director-General Eitan Bentsur secretly met the Yemeni foreign minister in Europe over the weekend.

"Even before this we sent a special emissary who brought a message from me," Levy said. "We

are maintaining channels of communications and now we are heading ... towards the main thing, another country with which we can open an interest office."

Levy said he could give no further details until Israel and Yemen issued a joint announcement.

Yediot Aharonot reported that

Yemen had agreed as a first stage to allow up to 10,000 Israelis of Yemenite extraction to visit and Israeli companies to invest in the country. There had been plans for singer Ofra Haza, who is of Yemenite extraction, to perform in Yemen but this was cancelled once it was disclosed.

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